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LETTERS

TO THE

Rev. Dr. KIPPIS,

OCCASIONED BY HIS

TREATISE,

ENTITLED,

*A Vindication of the Protestant Dissenting
Ministers,*

WITH REGARD TO

Their late Application to PARLIAMENT.

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DEAN OF GLOUCESTER.

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LETTERS

TO THE

Reverend Dr. KIPPIES.



LETTER I.

Concerning the Extent of the Claim of the Church of England to regulate the external Behaviour of her own Members; and also to influence their internal Judgments in Controversies of Faith.

Reverend Sir,

ERE I disposed to be too much elated by the signal Compliment, with which I am honoured at Page 13 of the 2d Edition of your Vindication of the Dissenting Ministers, you have yourself thrown in a previous Check to any extravagant Emotions of Self-Conceit, which might have been excited by such a Temptation: For at

Page 6, you say, " The most able and celebrated
 " (Arminian) Writers (in Defence of Arminian
 " Subscriptions) must ever bow to a Toplady and
 " a Bowman ; two Gentlemen who have lately
 " written in Defence of the Calvinistical Sense of
 " the Articles." And you add, " It seems to be
 " an INEATUATION that hath seized Numbers of
 " the Clergy, who are undoubtedly Arminians,
 " in being zealous for a Subscription to Articles,
 " which CANNOT be reconciled with their own
 " Sentiments."

HOWEVER, as your Compliment was personal,
 your Censure only general, extorted, as it prob-
 ably appeared to you, by the Force of Truth ;
 I beg your kind Acceptance of my best Thanks
 for the former : And I will endeavour to profit,
 as much as I can, by a right Use of the latter.
 To which End give me Leave to request your
 generous Assistance in the Prosecution of the fol-
 lowing Inquiry, *viz.* In what, or in which Part
 of my Apology doth this strange Infatuation ap-
 pear ? I myself, you will easily believe, am not
 conscious of it. And tho' I make no Pretensions
 to Infällibility, tho' I have my *maculas non paucas,*
quas aut incuria fudit, aut humana parum cavit
Natura ; yet I would willingly support the ge-
 neral Character of a consistent Writer, and a con-
 fident Protestant,---A Friend to Establishments,
 and equally a Friend to Toleration. This hath
 ever

ever been my Aim thro' Life; and wherever I have failed, it was thro' Ignorance, and not by Design.

You, Sir, appear to me in the Light of a very able Advocate for your Cause; and what is much better, but which, alas! can be said of *very few* controversial Writers, in the Light of an HONEST MAN. You are, on the whole, a candid and impartial Searcher after Truth: And I solemnly promise to follow you in the same Pursuit, as far as my Abilities will permit, let what will be the Consequence.

THEREFORE to the Matter of our present Inquiry---The Point, from which I set out in my late Apology, and which, I hope, I have invariably pursued from the Beginning to the End, is the unalienable Right of private Judgement, and the Liberty of following the Dictates of Conscience in every Case whatever, if really consistent with good Morals, and the just Rights of other Men. I am fully persuaded, that Dr Kippis did not intend to brand this laudable Principle with any Mark of his Disapprobation: And therefore so far I am safe. If then the Individual has such an unalienable Right to the Exercise of his private Judgement;---has he not a Right to arrange his own Thoughts in proper Order, to form and connect his Principles, and to sum
them

them up together by rejecting some Ideas, and by joining others? Doubtless he has this Right. For this is only saying in other Words, that he has a Right to the Exercise of his private Judgment. Now, Sir, I ask, What is this Arrangement of Thoughts, this Selection of Ideas, Connection of Principles, and summing them up together;---but in very Deed, the Formation of a System, the Composing of a Creed, and the Establishing of Articles of Faith, or Rules of Conduct for his own private Use?---I do not wish to impose either on my own Understanding, or on that of other Men. Read therefore, and consider, Whether any Idea hath slipt into this Argument, which ought not to have been admitted: And if there be any latent Fallacy, let us detect it before we proceed any farther.---I, for my Part, most solemnly declare, that if there be any Deception, it is past my Skill to discover it.---Be it therefore granted ('till the contrary is proved) that every Individual hath this Right to form his own System, his own Creed, and his own peculiar Principles; using the best Helps he can procure for this Purpose:---And then what will follow? Will you not allow, that other Individuals might join themselves to him, or he to them, if they and he thought proper? I cannot, I must not suppose, that you would wish to deny either him, or them this reasonable Liberty, and natural Right. And therefore, as we have now got a
Number

Number of Persons together, professing the same Sentiments, and united in the same Pursuits, (it matters not how many, or how few, and whether their Views terminate in this Life, or extend to another? --- But as the Association is now formed) the only Question remaining to be discussed is, How is this Society to act? With what Powers ought it to be invested? And, if it has any certain *End* or Object in View, What *Means* ought to be allowed for the Attainment of such End? The short Answer to these Questions seems to be this: That the Society have the same Rights, the same Powers and Privileges in their collective Character, which each of them has in his private Capacity as an Individual. Now I cannot see, but that every private Man should be left at Liberty to chuse his own Company, if they, for their Parts, are willing to associate with him: And *vice versa*, if either he, or they should grow disgusted with this Association, I cannot see, but that he has a Right to leave them, or they to discard him. Therefore the Powers of Admission, and of Rejection or Exclusion, so unalienable in the Case of an Individual, and so essential to the very Existence of every independent Society, being thus secured to both; --- It ought to be considered in the next Place, Whether, after the Society have agreed upon some certain End as the *joint Object* of their Wishes and Pursuits, they have not a Right also

to

to agree on the *proper Means* towards obtaining this End ;---provided that such Means be just and honest. The Individual hath undoubtedly a Right to chuse his own Means for the attaining of his own Ends, under the Limitations of Justice and good Morals above reserved. And if *He* has it, why have not a Collection of Individuals the same Right ? Or can you assign a Reason, why they should be debarred this Right in their collective, which each of them enjoys in his separate Capacity ?---I think you cannot ; nay, I am persuaded, that you are so steady, and so consistent a Friend to Liberty of Conscience, as not to attempt it. Therefore it must follow, that all independent Societies whatever (and consequently the Church of *England* among the rest) have an inherent Power, and an unalienable Right to appoint certain lawful Means for the attaining of certain good Ends : That is, they have a Power of adjusting their own external Conduct and Behaviour, and of regulating the Ceremonials of it, according to the best of their Skills and Judgments.

But here alas ! I am afraid, some of your dissenting Brethren (whom I must not call *Bigots*, because they are *Philosophers*) will be apt to start, as if an Apparition was rising out of the Earth !
 " What ! must we allow, that the Church hath
 " the Power, which she claims in her 20th Article ?

“ ticle? A Power to decree Rites and Ceremo-
 “ nies? A Power which we have so often branded
 “ with the odious Name of Popery? And a
 “ Power, in short, which we *modern* Dissenters
 “ have declared to be the unsurmountable Obsta-
 “ cle against *any Possibility* of a Reconciliation
 “ with the national Establishment? We cannot,
 “ we must not grant it.” And indeed, Sir, your
 own Words, Page 43, are very strong and em-
 phatic to the same Purpose. “ The Man, who
 “ did not ground his Separation from the Esta-
 “ blishment, chiefly upon these Considerations,
 “ would scarce be thought worthy the Name of
 “ a Dissenter.”

YET, Sir, notwithstanding this express De-
 claration, you must grant, that the Church hath
 this very Power, if you will be consistent with
 yourself, or with the natural and necessary Course
 of Things: For it is a Power, which you and all
 Mankind, Churchmen and Dissenters, Clergy-
 men and Laymen, continually exercise, in one
 Respect or other, both as Individuals, and as
 Members of particular Societies. It is in Fact
 a Power inseparable from Human Nature: For
 as Human Nature is compounded of Bodies, as
 well as Souls, it therefore necessarily follows,
 That Human Bodies will require Human Forms
 and Ceremonies, of one Kind or other, as long
 as we shall subsist in this material World.

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HOWEVER

HOWEVER, as this 20th Article is become such a Stumbling-Block, and a Rock of Offence to many, especially of *late*, let us examine it more attentively: Let us enquire, What is there in it so exceedingly obnoxious; and especially let us search out for that *very unsound* Part, which is the most infected with Popery, in order to expel the Poison, if we can.

Now this 20th Article, like almost all the rest, is *not* drawn up with that Accuracy and Precision, which are expected in modern Compositions. Our first Reformers had too many Things on their Hands at once, and had their Thoughts too much engaged in more important Pursuits, to be at Leisure to attend to Niceties of this Kind: So that if you find them right in the Main, that is all which you must expect from them. In fact this very Article is compounded of two different Parts, which ought to have been kept separate, because they come under distinct Considerations, and because the one doth not necessarily infer, or suppose the other.

The 1st is, That the Church assumes a Power to regulate the external Behaviour of her Members, *alias* to ordain Rites and Ceremonies: And the 2d. That she supposes herself possessed of a Right to influence the Judgment of her Members in dubious Disputes; or, in other Words, she lays a Claim to Authority in Controversies of Faith. IN

IN regard to the first of these Positions, it is the same in Effect with the Contents of the 34th Article, *viz.* of the Traditions [Customs or Ceremonies] of the Church; and therefore these two Articles ought to have been incorporated into one; which would then have run in the following Manner :

“ The Church hath Power to decree Rites and Ceremonies ; and yet it is not lawful for her to ordain any Thing that is contrary to God’s Word written. Moreover, it is not necessary, that Traditions and Ceremonies be in all Places one, and utterly alike. For at all Times they have been divers, and *may be changed* according to the Diversity of Countries, Times, and Men’s Manners ; so that nothing be ordained against God’s Word.

“ WHOSEVER through his private Judgment willingly and purposedly doth openly break the Traditions and Ceremonies of the Church (which be not repugnant to the Word of God, and be ordained and approved by common Authority) ought to be rebuked openly, that other may fear to do the like, as he that offendeth against the common Order of the Church, and hurteth the Authority of the Magistrate, and woundeth the Conscience of the weak Brethren.

“ EVERY particular or national Church hath

“ Authority to ordain, and abolish Ceremonies
 “ or Rites of the Church, ordained only by
 “ Man’s Authority, so that all Things be done
 “ to edifying.”

HERE, Sir, I hope you will allow, that we may find out a great deal which is *not* Popery, (tho’ there be some Parts, which, according to the Temper, Usage, and Principles of those Times, had too near an Affinity to *Intolerance*, which is indeed the worst Part of Popery.)

FOR 1st, these Articles expressly declare, that it is not lawful for the Church to ordain any Thing (any Rite or Ceremony) that is contrary to God’s Word *written*. Where it is evident, that the Phrase, God’s Word *written* was introduced, in order to guard against the Popish Claims of unwritten Traditions. Secondly, it is allowed, That Rites and Ceremonies need not be the same; or alike in all Places ;---nay, that every particular national Church is invested with Power and Authority to change or abolish the same, as Need shall require; which is another Blow at Papal universal Monarchy, and at the pretended Uniformity of the Church of *Rome*. And thirdly, that the Power of Legislation here allowed to be inherent in each particular Church, ought to be limited in the Exercise thereof, by the Consideration, that the Rites or Ceremonies

to

to be ordained, or appointed, are for the Use of *Edifying*. Surely, Sir, this is not Popery ; or if it be, I fear we shall come to that Pass at laſt, as to find out Popery in every Thing ;---than which Discovery the Protestants could not do a greater Service to the Church of *Rome*.

LEAVING therefore these Positions to maintain their own Ground against Popery,---let us now come to the grand Principle of all, *viz.* *That the Church hath, or ought to have, a Power of ordaining or appointing Rites and Ceremonies in certain Cases, and under certain Limitations.* And will you, Sir, ſeriously affirm, That the Church ought not to be entrusted with any ſuch Power, even under any Modifications whatſoever ? Will you poſitively affirm, That Churchmen, neither in their collective Capacity, nor by their Representatives, ought to be permitted to regulate and govern their own religious Assemblies ? Surely, Sir, you cannot ſay it.

BUT I beg Pardon : The Words *Church* and *Churchmen* may be fo offensive to the Ears of ſome Readers (though not to you) as to raife ſtrange Ideas in their Minds about the Abuse and Misapplication of Ecclesiastical Power : And then the Images of Maſſacres and Inquisitions, Racks and Tortures, ſtart up like ſo many ghastly Spectres before their Eyes. I will therefore

fore suppress those obnoxious Terms, and change the Scene : Nay, I will go farther, and take up the Matter on the most extensive Plan.

FIRST therefore, I do maintain, that it is essential to all Societies whatever to regulate the Behaviour of their own Members in such Things as relate to the Ends of their own Institutions. This is my general Assertion : And I do not recollect one single Instance to the contrary. But if you, Sir, do, I entreat it as a Favour to communicate to me that extraordinary Case, together with the peculiar Circumstances attending it, and the Consequences flowing from it.---Indeed I allow, that few Societies, if any, have thought it necessary to lodge a Specific Claim to this general Right, in any Office of public Records. And for that very Reason, perhaps, it would have been full as well, if the Church of England had likewise omitted her Claim ; as I shall shew more at large in another Place.---I will grant, I say, that the identical Words, THIS SOCIETY CLAIMS A RIGHT TO REGULATE THE BEHAVIOUR OF ITS OWN MEMBERS IN SUCH THINGS AS RELATE TO THE ENDS OF ITS OWN INSTITUTION, may not be found in legible Characters, either on the Walls of the Club-Room, or in the Books of the Society, or in any public Records. But the Fact which I maintain is this, That the Power itself is universally understood to exist ; and that it is implied

plied in the very Nature or Idea of Society itself: Nay, that every Society, or every Club, throughout the Universe, where Order and Regularity are preserved, must actually make Use of it, when the Exigencies of the Case shall require.

My second Position is, *That the more interesting and important the Ends of any Society are supposed to be, so much the more Care and Cau-tion ought to be observed, that the Power in Question be not abused or perverted from its original Design.* This Point I need not labour to prove; for herein I take for granted, we cannot widely differ.

WHEREFORE, thirdly, by Way of additional Security to the Rights and Liberties of Mankind, I lay it down as an *invariable Maxim*, *That those Members who disapprove of the Regulations which are approved of, or acquiesced in by the Majority, should have full Leave to depart peaceably from this Society, and to join themselves to some other, or to erect a new one, more agreeable to their own Consciences.* And here again, I am sure of obtaining your full Consent and Appro-bation.

THEREFORE, to apply these Maxims to the Case of religious Societies in general, and conse-quently to the Church of *England* in particular, as one of the Number ; —

1st.

1st. LET it be observed, that the first obvious Circumstance in a Christian Society, is the Day on which the Society esteems itself more particularly obliged to assemble together for the Purposes of social Worship. This Day is most probably of Human Appointment; for it would be exceedingly difficult to prove, either that our Lord himself made the Change from *Saturday* to *Sunday*, or that the Apostles ever met together, after his Crucifixion, to consult upon, or to establish this important Alteration, *as an Ordinance for ever*. And as to Texts of Scripture relating to this Point, where are they to be met with? Name the Place, the Verse, or Chapter, which contains such an express Injunction, if you can.—The utmost you can do, is to proceed by Way of Supposition, or Implication: For as to any positive Repeal of the Jewish, or an Institution of a Christian Sabbath, *in direct Terms*, the Scriptures are silent about them: And yet what shall we say? Or how shall we act?—Is this Institution to be therefore set aside, because it is deficient in a strict scriptural Proof? I hope not. Nay I do most sincerely wish, that the Sabbath was better observed than it is, both by Churchmen and Dissenters: In which I persuade myself, I have your hearty Concurrence.

2dly. AFTER the *Day*, comes the *Hour* of the Day, as a second Instance: For who can doubt, but

but that this is entirely of Human Appointment? Who can suppose, but that every independent Society, nay every particular Congregation will, or at least *ought*, to judge for themselves in this particular, and to consult their own Convenience?

3dly. The Place for holding the Assembly, *i.e.* the Room or Building, is a third Example of the same Kind.

4thly. The Mode of celebrating Divine Worship in that Place is a fourth: In Reference to which, it is natural for every independent Society to prefer and establish that Form, that Order, or that Rotation of Forms and Orders, which they think the best, and fittest for such a solemn Purpose. And surely they would be very blameable, if they acted otherwise.

5thly. The Habit or Dres of the Clergyman, or officiating Officer, is another Example of the Power and Influence of Human Institutions. And a most important one it is, when considered in every View. *Here therefore I observe with Pleasure, that the Dissenting Ministers in general are a Pattern to many among us: And that tho' they object to our *written* Law, they are a Law unto themselves. For they do not dress, as if they were ashamed of their holy Function;

which some of our giddy, foolish, and fantastical young Men are too apt to do. And as to their public Habiliments, the *Cloak* and *Band*, tho' these are not the same altogether with ours ; yet they were evidently intended to discriminate the Performer, when officiating in his public Character, from the same Man, acting only in his private Capacity. Now as these, and such like Things, can have no Pretensions whatever to a Divine Original, they are evidently human Rites and Ceremonies, and they must be considered as the mere Inventions of Men.

UPON the whole, therefore, view the Matter in what Light you please ; and the Issue of the Argument will be much the same. Christ, you say, is the sole Legislator in his Church : Granted : But Christ himself expects, that we should use our Reason and our Judgments in understanding his Laws, and in applying his *general* Instructions to *particular* Times and Circumstances. In short, we never consult his Honour to better Purpose, we never shew ourselves to be his faithful Followers, and loyal Subjects more effectually, than when we act agreeably to the Natures which he has given us, and to those several Relations in which he has placed us.

But still I find, you are disposed to reply,
“ That tho' the modern Dissenters are obliged

“ to use a few human Institutions, as Helps or Instruments in their present Situation, yet “ they use the fewest possible ; and as to what “ they are obliged to use, they lay no Stress “ upon them, much less do they make them the “ Terms of Christian Communion ; which they “ think we of the Church of *England* are guilty “ of doing.”

Now, as to the *Paucity* of the Number of Human Inventions introduced into the Affairs of Religion, that is a distinct Consideration, which may be treated of by itself. But in regard to the general Doctrine and Position, I do aver, that in whatever Sense the Church of *England* makes Rights and Ceremonies the Terms of Christian Communion, every dissenting Congregation makes them the Terms of Communion in the same Sense.

To convince any Man of this, let us conceive the following Experiment to be made : Let a Number of Men be supposed to be met together, who being warmed with Zeal against making Rites and Ceremonies the Terms of Christian Communion, are resolved to bear their Testimony against this Encroachment on Christian Liberty, and to oppose it, wherever they can. Unluckily they happen to be some of your own Flock, who having been animated by your Discourses on

this Topic, are encouraged to apply to you, as to a Person the best disposed to assist them in this good Work: And therefore propose to begin the Reformation in your own Church. They first insist, that the *Day* for the more solemn Performance of public Worship ought to be changed *now* and *then* for some other Day; because there is no certain Proof of the Divine Institution of what we call the *Lord's Day*, to be drawn from Scripture.---Then the *Hour* of the Day must be altered likewise;---then the Place of Meeting,---then the Mode of Worship,---and and lastly the Habit or Dress of the Pastor and Teacher himself must undergo what Metamorphoses they think best:---And to crown these Extravagancies, they insist, that they have a Right to interrupt the Service, and disturb the Congregation, 'till their Request for the Restoration of this Christian Liberty is granted to them.

IN such a Situation, what would you do?--- Grant them their Request, I am satisfied you would not: Indeed it is morally impossible that you should; and therefore, if you could not persuade them to desist (and such Sort of Men are not easily persuaded) you and the sober Part of your Congregation have but one Expedient left; and that is to *expel them*, and to call upon the Civil Magistrate for Protection against their Violence. Nor surely are you to be blamed for having

ing had Recourse to this last Expedient, when others failed. But then, be pleased to observe, That the chief Error of these Men consisted in their setting out on a wrong Principle, *viz.* *That no human Inventions ought to be permitted to take Place in Matters of Religion;* which erroneous Principle ought therefore to have been rectified the first of all.

UPON the whole, Sir, the Consequence is unavoidable, and the Church of *England* is justified in her Conduct, at least in this Respect. For the Church of *England* hath undoubtedly a Right in common with all other Societies, and all other Churches, to regulate the Behaviour of her own Members, in such Things as relate to the Ends of her own Institution: And if you will still persist in your Charge and Accusation against us, you must at least be obliged to withdraw your present Bill, and bring in another with capital Alterations and Amendments.

WHEREFORE my 2d Position (Page 15) was,
 " That the more interesting and important the
 " Ends of any Society are supposed to be, so much
 " the more Care and Caution ought to be observ-
 " ed, that the Power of ordaining Rites and Cere-
 " monies be not perverted and abused." And I
 subjoin this Maxim to the former with great Wil-
 kingness. For tho' the Power in Question must
 be

be allowed to be necessary in a certain Degree, and under proper Restrictions; yet I do most ingenuously acknowledge, that it is a Power very liable to Abuse, and that unless it be vigilantly guarded, it tends to Corruption almost insensibly. The Church of *England* thinks and hopes, that she has added those Guards and Cautions which are necessary in this Respect; first by making a Provision, that no Ceremonies should be ordained or allowed contrary to God's written Word; and secondly, that those which are allowed, should tend to the Use of Edifying. And surely, if any Church has been so happy, as to keep the golden Mean between too many, and too few, between loading the Service of God with external Rites and Ceremonies on the one Extreme, and stripping it so bare on the other, as not to leave Room enough for bodily Obeisance, as well as for mental Contemplation, the Church of *England* may modestly put in her Claim in this respect. But, alas! she finds herself attacked on both Sides for this very Instance of Moderation. The Church of *Rome* accuses her with having reformed so far, as not to leave Ceremonials enough for the public Worship of Almighty God; whereas the dissenting Church upbraids her with having still retained a great deal too many. By the by, a moderate, impartial Man, who is indifferent to all three, would be tempted from this very Circumstance to conclude, That

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as she doth not go into an Excess on either Side, she has a fairer Chance than either of them, to be in the right.

BUT let that pass; our present Dispute is not with the Papists, but with our Brethren, the Protestant Dissenters, who bring very heavy Accusations against us for being Popishly affected: And yet, after all their loud Complaints, I think, this heavy Charge, as far as Rites and Ceremonies are concerned, terminates only in two Particulars, *viz.* The Sign of the Crois *after the Administration* of public Baptism; and the Act of Kneeling during the Reception of the holy Sacrament:---At least no mention is made (to the best of my Remembrance) in a very * celebrated, and very able Performance of any other *superstitious* Rites and Ceremonies, but these two.

Now,

* See Dr. Furneaux's Answer to Mr. Justice Blackstone. The Doctor in a Note accuses the Church of England with making the Sign of the Crois essential to the Celebration of Baptism. This, at least, must be an inaccurate Way of speaking: A Fault which Dr. Furneaux is as free from as most Men living. But indeed both the Inaccuracy itself, and the Doctrine contained, *viz.* that the Use of the Crois is *popish* and *superstitious*, should have passed unnoticed by me (as the Doctor knows) had not his Treatise received such a signal Mark of Approbation from the Dissenting Ministers of the three Denominations. (See Dr. Kippis, P. 40, 2d Edition) Therefore it is this which makes the *false* Question about the Power of decreeing Rites and Ceremonies, (a Power which every

Now, Sir, be pleased to take Notice, that I say, The Sign of the Cross *after* the Administration of *public* Baptism: For this is truly and literally the Case, and not as the Objection is commonly made, The Sign of the Cross *in* or *at* Baptism. For there is no Sign used at all *in* or *at* *private* Baptism; and as to *public* Baptism, it is not used *in* or *during* the *Act* of baptizing, but after the *Act* is complete and ended. Therefore it is impossible that the Church of *England* should make the Sign of the Cross to be necessary either to the *Sacrament* of Baptism, or to the *Celebration* of that Sacrament.—Not to the Sacrament itself, because the sacramental Part is finished, before the Cross is used; and not to the *Celebration* of the Sacrament, because the Sacrament is frequently administered without any signing with the Cross at all. However, used, I confess, it is during the Performance of Divine Service at that Ordinance; and therefore, as we are called upon to defend the Use, it is incumbent on us to give a satisfactory Reason for the Institution, if we can. Now this I humbly apprehend, will be no diffi-

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every Society, and every Church, must *unavoidably* exercise) become again of some Importance. It is this which gives Dignity to a Subject, which otherwise appears to be a *very insignificant* one. For after all, and dispute as long as you will, every Society upon Earth must be allowed the Power of decreeing or appointing as many Rites and Ceremonies, as are *proper* for the Ends of its Institution: And none, that I know of, contend for *improper* ones.

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cult Matter to do, if we seriously attend to the Circumstances and Situation either of the Primitive Christians, who *introduced* the Practice,---or of the Reformers who *retained* it,---or of ourselves who *continue* it.

THE Primitive Christians were ridiculed and insulted by the Gentiles for worshipping a crucified Malefactor, and for expecting Salvation from such a Source. The orthodox Christians did not attempt to conceal this Circumstance of their Saviour's Crucifixion [as the Jesuits in *China* have been accused of doing] but on the contrary, they *gloried* in it: And therefore to shew more evidently to their Persecutors, that they were not ashamed of the Cross of Christ, they used it at Baptism, and at some other solemn Occasions. In Fact, the Gentiles had required them to do Sacrifice to their Gods by the Ceremony of taking a little Frankincense between Finger and Thumb, and throwing it into the Fire: This they refused to do, (tho' immediate Death was often the Consequence of such Refusal;) because such an Action was understood by both Parties to imply a Renunciation of Christianity: Therefore they used the Sign of the Cross by Way of a *Counter-Ceremony*, or as a contrary Token. And none were supposed to be either afraid, or ashamed to use this Badge of their Christian Profession, but those who were either open Apostates, or were begin-

ning to apostatize. Now, Sir, I cannot say, what our refined, modern, philosophic, polite, enlightened, free-thinking Christians may judge of this Matter; but to me, who am a plain Man, and an old-fashioned Christian, the Motives of the primitive Christians, for the Use of this Ceremony, do not appear to be *very bad ones.*

AGAIN, when our first Reformers shook off the Chains of Popery, they were accused by their Adversaries, as intending to throw off all Regard to the Christian Religion at the same Time. They denied the Charge; and therefore to prove openly to the World, by a *sensible Evidence*, that they still retained the Faith of Christ crucified, and that they were not ashamed to confess him before Men, they ordained, That whosoever would begin the *public Profession* of the Christian Religion, should begin it with the Sign of the Cross. But be pleased to observe, that in doing this, they took especial Care to guard against any superstitious Notions of the supposed intrinsic Virtue, Charm, or Power of this Ceremony; for they did not permit it to be used in private, where superstitious Practices might have crept in; but they ordained, that the Ceremony should be used in the Presence of the Congregation, to whom it was intended to be a public Evidence, that the Person, who had been then baptized,

was

was not ashamed to confess the Faith of Christ crucified ; and that he would (by God's Grace) manfully fight under Christ's Banner against Sin, the World, and the Devil, and continue Christ's faithful Soldier and Servant unto his Life's End. [See the *Baptism of those of riper Years.*] Now here again, whether our Reformers were justified in retaining the Sign of the Cross on such Motives, and with such Views, is a Question which must be left to the impartial World to determine.

WHEREFORE 3dly, let us come to our own Times ; and by bringing the Objection home to ourselves, let us attend to the full Force of it. “ You *continue* the Practice of signing with the “ Cross, introduced by the Primitive Christians, “ and *retained* by the Reformers ; tho' you have “ not the same Plea to offer in your Justification, “ which they had.” Granted. “ Therefore the “ Continuance of it must be at least in *you* an In-“ stance of *Popery, and Superstition.*” Denied. We continue it as a Ceremony *good* in its original, *venerable* for its Antiquity, *innocent* in itself, and *religious* in its Application. We ascribe no Virtue whatever to it ; and though we ourselves have no Objections against retaining it, yet we are very ready to part with it, provided it shall appear, that the Abolition will be attended with more Good than Evil. We are so situated as to have,

or

or to think that we have, weak Brethren on either Side of us. You on the one Hand demand the Abolition of it in very strong Terms, and we wish to gratify you, though you do not give us the least Encouragement to hope, that this will bring you nearer to a Reconciliation. On the other Hand, Numbers of our own People are as earnest for retaining, as you can be for abolishing it. They say, that they consider it as a very *edifying* Ceremony, and peculiarly proper to express their Faith and Hope in a crucified Saviour; and that as this Doctrine begins now to grow out of Fashion in the polite, new-enlightened World, they think they have a stronger Motive than usual for shewing openly that they are not ashamed of the Cross of Christ. Nay more, they suspect that all this Profusion of Zeal against an harmless indifferent Action, which in itself is nothing at all, must have some latent Meaning, which is not yet ripe for a Discovery. And they say they are confirmed in this Suspicion, when they consider the Tendency of many of those Writings, which have appeared, and the Drift of those Arguments, which have been urged for the abolishing Clerical Subscriptions. They are convinced in their Consciences, by putting Things together, that the real Scheme in Agitation is to reduce the Gospel of Christ into a System of mere natural Religion, or a Code of Morals; and therefore, as they conceive higher Ideas of *Christ Jesus*,

Jesus, than they do of *Socrates*, or of *Confucius*, or even of the highest Angel or Arch-Angel, that ever was, or *can* be created; they think they have a Right to declare this their Faith before Men, and to publish to the World, that they will not deny the Lord that bought them, either by Word or *Deed*.

PERHAPS, Sir, you will say, that all this is mere Prejudice, Mistake, and Misapprehension, Bigotry, Superstition, or what you please. It may be so: But then, be pleased to consider, that these Men ought to enjoy a Liberty of Conscience (even supposing that their Consciences are erroneous) as well as others: And that they ought not to be *dispossessed* of that Church, of which they are actually in Possession:---Provided they leave to others the Right of separating from them, if they are so minded.

THEREFORE the whole Matter comes back again to that Point, from whence we set out at Page 15 of this Treatise, *viz.* "That those Members (the Minority) who disapprove of the Regulations, which are approved of, or acquiesced in, by the Majority, ought to have full Leave to depart peaceably from this religious Society, and either to join themselves to some other, or to erect a new one, according to the Dictates of their own Consciences."

Now,

Now, here, Sir, I most freely own, that our Reformers were much to blame. And therefore, what was truly *Popish* in this Dispute about Rites and Ceremonies, and what ought to have been the *sole Object* of the Animadversion both of Dr. *Furneaux*, and of yourself, was,---not the Power in Question,---but the *Monopoly* of that Power,---a pretended exclusive Right in one Church, or in one Society, to the Exercise of a Power which equally belonged to all Societies whatsoever, and indeed to all Mankind. This, it must be confessed, was *rank Popery*. But, alas! who could throw the first Stone at the Papists on that Account? Not the Church of *England* I confess: And I am glad to find at Page 23 of your Vindication, that you are so ingenuous as to make a like Confession in regard to those antient Dissenters, called the *Puritans*. Let us therefore not dissemble the Matter; but frankly acknowledge that there were Faults on both Sides, because it is very certain, that both Sides were equally in Fault. And it is a mean, and a *dishonest* Manceuvre to load the one with Censures, and the other with Praises. If the pitiful Pretence, that the *Principles of Liberty* *were not then sufficiently understood*, were to be allowed to excuse one Side, it must equally excuse both: But if no Allowance of this Sort is to be made for the one, why then should it be alledged with so much Pomp for the other? And yet.--- But

But I do not wish to exaggerate; and therefore I forbear. The Truth is, both Parties reduced themselves to that unhappy Dilemma, that they must persecute in their own Defence; for they carried on a Kind of internecine War, in which no Quarter was to be given; so that whether a *Laud*, or a *Prynne* was uppermost, the Consequence in Regard to Persecution was just the same. And, strange as it is to tell, the Fact was really so, that there was not a Man of all the numerous Sects of Protestants, at their first Separation from the Church of *Rome*, who so far entered into the Spirit of the Reformation, or was so far consistent with his own Principles, as to allow to others that Liberty which he claimed to himself: Not a Man who reasoned after the following Manner, “If I take the Liberty of separating from the Church of *Rome*, because I judge her to be erroneous in regard to Faith, or superstitious in respect to Practice, I ought to allow to others the same Right of separating from me, or from my Church, on a like Persuasion.” On the contrary, whilst every Sect was proclaiming against Persecution, when undermost, every Sect was meditating to persecute in its Turn; and to wield the *Sword of the Lord, and of Gideon*, as soon as ever they should acquire Strength to do it.

You

But

You, Sir, suppose that the *English* Independents (page 23) were the first Persons who found out the Right of Liberty of Conscience. I am not disposed to detract from my Countrymen the Honour of this Discovery: But I fear the Fact is far otherwise. I believe the *Dutch* were the first People who forbore to persecute, by discovering that those who could agree about buying and selling, need not cut one another's Throats about Points in Religion. Indeed the Apologies of *Episcopius* at the Synod of *Dort*, and the Writings of *Grotius*, might have given a Sanction to this mercantile Proceeding; and might have enabled those who felt the Benefit of a Freedom of Trade, to give good Reasons likewise for Liberty of Conscience. But the Principle itself did not originate from Divines and Philosophers, but from Tradesmen and Mechanics; and mortifying as the Consideration is, I fear it must be acknowledged, that the Idea of being a *consistent Protestant* never entered into the Head of any Man for upwards of seventy Years after the Reformation. Happy should I have been, if the Times would have permitted me to declare, that the Case at present is entirely altered. ---Happy could I have said that every Protestant Society is now convinced of the Justice of extending that Liberty, and those Rights to others, not only in *some*, but in *all* Respects, which they claim themselves. But alas! the State of the Episcopal Church in

America,

*America, and the late Rejection of your very just and reasonable Request to enjoy a fixt and legal Toleration, instead of a temporary and precarious Connivance, here in England, but too plainly prove, that both the Mother Country, and the *Colonies have that great Protestant Principle and Gospel Lesson yet to learn, of doing as they would be done by.*

I hope, Sir, you will forgive me, that I do not now proceed to consider the Case of kneeling at the Holy Sacrament. But really I am afraid I have been too tedious already, and I am grown quite tired of the Dispute, tho' I have at least as much to say on this Subject as on the other. The Truth is, in my humble Opinion, this Controversy about Rites and Ceremonies, as it sub-

* While I was writing this, I was informed, that an Attempt will be made by some Persons (who feel the Weight of this Reproach) to remove some Part of the Load, by introducing a Bill for an Episcopate in *Canada*; but if the Terms of the Bill are according as they have been represented to me, I much question, whether the Author really meant, or wished, it should pass.—At the most, the proposed Remedy amounts only to this, that the Church of *England* may, *some Time hence*, find a *little Relief* in her own Case, provided she will agree to the being made the *Instrument of persecuting* the Church of *Rome*. But surely Persecution is Popery, and the worst of Popery, come from what Quarter it may: And I will add, with the late excellent Lord Chancellor *Hardwick*, speaking of some of the sanguinary Laws of *Ireland*, against the Papists, God forbid, that we should think of extirpating Popery by Popish Methods!

fists at present between the Church of *England* and the Dissenters, is as idle and as trifling an Affair as ever engaged the Pens of learned Men. *Rites and Ceremonies there must be of some Sort or other* : Granted.—*They ought to be few in Number, well chosen, and very proper* : Granted also.—*Those who do not approve of the present Set, ought to be at Liberty to chuse others for themselves* : Granted again. And thus end all the learned Controversies about Rites and Ceremonies.

WE are therefore now come to consider your second grand Objection against the Church of *England*,---THE CHURCH HATH AUTHORITY IN CONTROVERSIES OF FAITH !

You did not enter into any Dispute, whether these Words were an Interpolation or not ; and you did wisely : For the very Context requires, that either these, or others of a like Import, should be placed at the Beginning of this Article ; and therefore there is an *internal Proof*, as well as external ones, that the Passage itself is genuine. Now when those Parts of this 20th Article, which relate to Rites and Ceremonies, are separated from the present Subject (as I observed before they ought to have been) the Remainder will run thus :

“ THE Church hath Authority in Controversies of Faith : And yet it is not lawful for the
“ Church

“ Church so to expound one Place of Scripture
 “ that it be repugnant to another: Wherefore
 “ altho’ the Church be a Witness and a Keeper
 “ of Holy Writ; yet, besides the same, ought it
 “ not to enforce any Thing to be believed for
 “ Necessity of Salvation.”

TAKING therefore the Words as they stand, you pronounce Sentence of Condemnation against them in the following Strain. “ The Pretensions
 “ to such a Power, and the actual Exercise of it,
 “ can never be maintained, but upon Principles
 “ subversive of genuine Protestantism: Until
 “ therefore these Principles be renounced, the
 “ Ministers of the Establishment will often ap-
 “ pear weak and inconsistent Adversaries of the
 “ Church of *Rome.*” Page 5, 2d Edit.

HERE, Sir, are many Principles: And I hope you do not require us to renounce them all promiscuously. For Example, you do not wish, that we should renounce the Principle, *that it is not lawful for the Church so to expound one Place of Scripture, that it may be repugnant to another.* For this at least is good Protestantism; whatever becomes of the rest: Again, you do not condemn the Principle, *that the Church ought not to enforce any Thing to be believed for Necessity of Salvation, which is beside [i. e. not to be found in] the Scripture.* Surely, I say, you, as a zealous Protestant,

Protestant, can have no Objection against our retaining this Clause, in direct Opposition to the Popish Claims of oral *Traditions*. Nor, thirdly, can you, I humbly hope, be much offended at the Expression, *that the Church is a Witness, and a Keeper of Holy Writ.* For it is evident to common Sense, that the Reformers did not mean to assert, that the Church of *England*, or any other particular Church, exclusive of other Churches, was a Witness or a Keeper of the Word of God: But they evidently meant by the Expression, the Church diffusive or the Church universal; to whom [or to which] in *general* (and not to the Church of *Rome* in *particular*) the Promise was made by Christ, that the Gates of Hell should not prevail against it. Therefore the Consequence is inevitable, *viz.* Either the Church Universal must be a Witness and a Keeper of the grand Charter of Christian Salvation; or if there be none to keep the Scriptures, and none to bear Witness to the Truth of them, the Gates of Hell must necessarily prevail.

WELL then, *weak* and *inconsistent* as we the Ministers of the Establishment are pronounced to be, it must be granted, that we hold some Doctrines not very favourable to the Growth of Popery, even by subscribing to this obnoxious twentieth Article.

" BUT

“ BUT you maintain in this twentieth Article
 “ the Doctrine of Authority ; which is a Popish
 “ Doctrine !” — Let us, good Sir, not dispute
 about Words : We do acknowledge that the
 Church ought to be invested with some Kind of
 Authority. But with what Kind ? Is it that Kind
 which the Papists Claim ? Or is it that which the
 Protestants allow, at least in Practice, and which
 perhaps is necessary to the well being of Mankind ?
 The Papists claim a *blind Submission* to the Decrees
 or the Church in *all Cases* whatsoever. --- The
 Church of *England* claims a *Deference* to her
 Judgment in *disputable Points* only (in Contro-
 versies of Faith) but in no other Matters ; and
 not even in these, if it shall appear that she
 either expounds one Place of Scripture in Repug-
 nance to another ; or if she should require any
 Thing to be believed as of Necessity to Salvation,
 which is not to be found in the said Scriptures.
 Now, Sir, I beg Leave to constitute yourself the
 Judge in these Matters, whether these two Au-
 thorities (the same in Word) are the same in
 Sense ? And if they be not, what then becomes
 of this vehement Charge of Popery ? --- There are
 but two Things, which either you, or the Asso-
 ciation at the *Feathers*, can possibly reply to this
 Refutation. The 1st is, that we are guilty of a
 gross Prevarication in not setting forth the Doc-
 trine of our Church in its true and genuine Light :
 For her Claims respecting Authority, are much

greater

greater and more extensive than we now represent them: And the 2d, that granting even that we do not soften the Features, or hide the Deformity of this Popish Monster, yet the Claim is horrid and hideous at the best; because no human Authority, under any Modification, or in any Degree whatever, ought to be admitted in *Disputes* about Religion.

IN respect to the first Accusation, we have two Sorts of Evidences to produce: The first is, the express Words of this very Article before quoted; to which therefore we solemnly refer.

AND the 2d,---supposing even, that a Doubt should arise about the Sense of any particular Passage in this Article, we further appeal to the co-temporary Writings of the Compilers of these Articles, by Way of Comment and Illustration. And by what Writings do you suppose we desire to be tried?---Not by the private Opinions of the Reformers (tho' they likewise are in our Favour as many as have escaped the Ravages of Time) but, a *fortiori*, by the public Acts and Monuments of the Church; even by the Evidences of the Homilies themselves; for the very first of them begins with a "fruitful Exhortation to the Reading and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures;" in which Homily our Reformers permit, nay CONJURE all the Members of the Church of

England,

England, over and over, to read, and judge for themselves. In the first Part of the Homily our Reformers give this pathetic Exhortation ;---

“ Let us reverently hear and read Holy Scripture, which is the Food of the Soul : Let us “ diligently search for the Well of Life, in the “ Books of the Old and New Testament, and “ not run to the stinking Puddles of Men’s Traditions (devised by Men’s Imaginations) for “ our Justification and Salvation. For in Holy “ Scripture is fully contained what we ought to “ do, and what to eschew, what to believe, what to “ love, and what to look for at God’s Hand at “ length. *In these Books we shall find the Father from whom, the Son to whom, and the Holy Ghost in whom,* “ all Things have their Being, and keeping up ; and “ these three Persons to be but one God, and one “ Substance. In these Books we may learn to “ know ourselves, how vile and miserable we “ be, and also to know God, how good he is of “ himself, and how he maketh * us, and all “ Creatures Partakers of his Goodness. We may

* Is this the Doctrine of Calvinism ? And do our Reformers really here mean absolute unconditional Election and Reprobation, by saying, that God maketh *Us* and ALL Creatures Partakers of his Goodness ? but if they did not mean this, what else could they mean, but universal Redemption and universal Grace ; that is, the putting us into a *salvable State*, and then leaving it to our own Conduct, whether we shall be *actually saved or not* ? See the Words of the Church Catechism to the same Effect.

“ learn

“ learn also in these Books to know God’s Will
 “ and Pleasure, as much as (for this present
 “ Time) is convenient for us to know: And (as
 “ the great Clerk and godly Preacher St. John
 “ Chrysostom faith) whatsoever is required to the
 “ Salvation of Man, is fully contained in the
 “ Scripture of God.”

AGAIN, in the 2d Part of the Homily, the Author, after having censured the two frivolous Pretences which Men frequently offer to excuse themselves from reading the Scriptures, *viz.* the Danger of falling into Error through personal *Ignorance*; and 2dly, the like Danger thro’ the *intrinsic* Difficulty and *Hardness* of the Book itself, tells his Readers in regard to the first, “ If you
 “ be afraid to fall into *Error* by reading of
 “ Holy Scripture, I shall shew you how you may
 “ read without Danger of Error. Read it
 “ humbly, with a meek and lowly Heart, to the
 “ Intent you may glorify God, and not yourself
 “ with the Knowledge of it; and read it not with-
 “ out daily praying to God, that he would direct
 “ your Reading to good Effect; and take upon
 “ you to *expound it no farther than you can plainly*
 “ *understand it*. Humility will only search to
 “ know the *Truth*; it will search, and bring to-
 “ gether one Place with another, and where it
 “ cannot find out the Meaning, it will pray; it
 “ will ask of *others, that know*, and will not rashly
 “ and

“ and presumptuously define any Thing which it
“ knoweth not. This I have said, as touching
“ the Fear to read, through *Ignorance* of the
“ Person.

“ And as concerning the *Hardness* of Scripture
“ (which was the 2d Excuse) he that is so weak
“ that he is not able to brook strong meat, yet he
“ may suck the sweet and tender Milk, and defer
“ the rest until he wax stronger, and come to
“ more Knowledge. For God receiveth the
“ learned and unlearned, and *casteth away none*,
“ but is * **INDIFFERENT TO ALL**: And whofo-
“ ever giveth his Mind to holy Scriptures, with
“ diligent Study, and burning Desire, it cannot
“ be (with St. Chrysostom) that he should be left
“ without Help: For either God Almighty will
“ send him some *godly Doctor to teach him*,--or
“ else, if we lack a learned Man to instruct and
“ teach us, yet God himself from above will give
“ Light unto our Minds, and teach us those
“ Things which are *necessary* for us, and wherein
“ we be ignorant.”

* Here again, can a Calvinist possibly subscribe to this Doctrine, *That God casteth none away, but is indifferent unto all*, without some *secret Distinction*, and *mental Reservation*? He cannot. Let those Points therefore be duly remembered, when we come to treat more particularly of the Doctrines of the Church regarding the quinquarticular Controversy in the 2d Letter.

F

Now,

“ learn also in these Books to know God’s Will
 “ and Pleasure, as much as (for this present
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Now,

Now, Sir, how do you understand this long Quotation? Doth it abridge the Right of private Judgment? Doth it command us to obey without Examination, and to submit implicitly to the Decisions of the Church? On the contrary, doth it not plainly say, that every Man ought *first* to read and *judge* for himself;---and *then*, but not before, if he find any Difficulty which he cannot solve, either on Account of his own Ignorance, or the *Hardness* of the Place;---then it is his Duty to have Recourse to others, who *know better* than himself, to some godly Doctor, or learned Man for further Instruction. And if this is to be branded with the Name of Popery, I declare myself to have been a Papist all my Life. If this is to be considered as an arrogant Infringement of the Use of Reason, or the Exercise of private Judgment, I know not, I confess, what the Use of the one, and the Exercise of the other, really means.

BUT you have one Post more still to retire to, which you seem to think to be *so impregnable*, that you can assail us at Pleasure from it, without exposing yourself to any Danger. The Post I mean is, "That STRONG HOLD, that Human Authority in every Degree, and under every Modification ought to be *totally* disclaimed in *"Disputes or Controversies about Religion."*"

HERE

HERE, Sir, you best can explain, how it came to pass, that in this very Treatise against Human Authority, you have availed yourself so frequently of the Authority of Great Men, when favourable to your Cause. For at Page 44 of your second Edition, I read these Words, "Mr. *Locke's admirable Letters on Toleration.*—
 " *The solid and manly Reasonings of Dr. Calamy.*
 " It is an undoubted Fact, that Mr. *LOCKE,*
 " *approved of his Argument.* Bishop *Hoadley*
 " appears to be *enlightened* by his Method of
 " *Reasoning.*" Now, Sir, as you have mentioned the Names of these three great and respectable Men; give me Leave to ask, with what View, to what End, or Purpose did you mention them? Undoubtedly to do HONOUR to your Cause. And you did right. But then you ought not to have objected to a like Conduct in us? You ought not to have made use of Human Authority at all, when it makes for you; if you will not allow of the same Liberty of using it, when it happens to make against you.

HOWEVER, this I urge only by the by, as an *Argumentum ad Hominem*; and merely to shew what a Breach you yourself have made in your own Strong-hold: For I do not rest the Merits of my Cause on such a Foundation. Therefore I pass on now to a general Proposition, which is this,---That under the Restrictions and Limitations

before mentioned, *viz.* That Human (or if you please Church) Authority ought never to be appealed to, but in *disputable Points, doubtful Cases, or Controversies of Faith*; and that it should not be admitted even then, if it pretended to expound one Place of Scripture in Opposition to another; or if it required any Thing to be believed as of Necessity to Salvation, which is not to be found in the holy Scriptures: I say, the Use of the Authority, thus confined and restrained, is not only vindicable in the Church of *England*, but must be admissible into every Church upon Earth. This, Sir, is my general Assertion, and if I am wrong, the following Method, will, I hope, be allowed by you, by Dr. *Furneaux*, and by every Gentleman (of the *Arminian Persuasion*) who voted him Thanks *April 16, 1771*, to be a very impartial and a very expeditious Manner of detecting my Mistake. Put the Case [A Case which I dare believe has often been the *Fact*] That you (in common with your Brethren, the other Dissenting Clergy) had been frequently exhorting the People committed to your Care, to study the Holy Scriptures, and seriously to meditate upon them: and for their greater Encouragement in this good Work, you had given them to understand, that you would assist them in the best Manner you were able; cautioning them at the same Time not to rely too much on your Judgment: For that you had no Power to interpret

pret one Part of Scripture in Contradiction to another; neither had you any Right to require them to believe any Thing as *necessary to Salvation*, which is not contained in the Word of God.

IN Consequence of these pious Exhortations and good Directions, one of your own Flock applies to you for the Assistance you had promised. This Difficulty arises, not from the awful Mystery of the Trinity, or the Incarnation, nor yet from the important Doctrine of Christ's Atonement, his propitiatory Sacrifice, and Redemption: For as to all these Points, I know what *some Moderns* would say to a doubting Conscience on such Occasions:---But this Man's peculiar Difficulty arises from St. Paul's Description of the *Carnal Man, sold under Sin*, in his 7th Chapter to the *Romans*; a Difficulty, which I have been called upon to solve more than once; and which, I believe, most Ministers of the Gospel of any Standing or Experience, have had Occasion to explain. The Querist therefore wishes to know, Whether St. Paul spoke these Words of himself, and in his own Person, as they seem at first Reading to imply;---or under the borrowed Character of a *very wicked unregenerate Man*? For having read the Comments of several of the old Puritans on this Passage, he finds that they all, with the Assembly of the *Westminster Divines* at the Head of them, agree in maintaining, that St. Paul was describing

describing his own State of Mind, and the Depravity of his own personal Character, at the very Time he was inditing this Epistle.---Whereas he (the Querist) hath heard several Discourses from you, which assert quite the contrary,---expressing your Surprise and Indignation, that any one should maintain, that St. *Paul* could be a beloved Child of God, and yet such an abominable Slave to Sin, and Servant of the Devil at the same Time. Nay, I will suppose, that you have frequently declared in your Sermons, that whatever Tenet tends to weaken the Obligations to Repentance and a Reformation of Life, and either directly, or in its Consequences, lulls the Sinner into a false Hope, and a fatal Security, is an *unsound* Doctrine, and ought to be rejected as *unscriptural* by every sound Believer. Therefore after having read this 7th Chapter over and over, and being distracted by these contradictory Expositions, and not able of himself to determine which is the true one;---he applies at last to his *approved* Pastor for a Solution of the Difficulty by a personal Conference. Now, Sir, if you should not be able to remove his Doubts, and satisfy his Scruples, what would you propose to do? You would not, I hope, advise him to remain in a State of Scepticism, and absolute Suspense, in a Point of so much Importance to all the Duties of common Life, and daily Practice. Much less would you give your Consent, that he should live

live and act as if the Exposition of the antient Puritans was the Meaning of the Apostle ; as if the *Habit of Regeneration*, and the *Habit of Sin* were both compatible. You have therefore but one Course to take, which is this : To tell him, that in all *dubious Cases*, where Religion and Morality are concerned, * he ought to rely on the Judgment of his *approved Teacher*, if he can form none of his own : That you do not desire him to resign up his Conscience to your Direction ; but that if he is unable to direct it himself, it ought to be directed in a Case of such Importance as the present, by some one or other ; and that in his Situation, while he remains a Part

* Perhaps a cavilling Objector might attempt to retort the Argument by saying, that if this be true, it is a two-edged Sword, which cuts both Ways : For if an Arminian Expositor hath a Right to expect an Acquiescence to his Judgment in dubious Cases, and where the Mind is balancing, a Calvinist, for the same Reason, and in the same Circumstance, may expect a like Submission. Be it so ; for the Abuse of a Thing is no Argument at all against the Use of it. With the Tongue bad Men curse one another ; and yet the same Instrument ought to be used to bless God even the Father. But indeed the 20th Article hath put in a Guard against such a Misapplication, as far as human Prudence can foresee and direct. The Guard I mean is, that no human Authority should be admissible, in any Case, where it attempts to expound one Place of Scripture in Opposition to another, or where it requires any Thing to be believed as of Necessity to Salvation, which is not proveable from Scripture. In short, Guides and Instructors have often misled, and will mislead again : But no Man from hence infers, that Guides and Instructors ought never to be trusted, or are not at any Time necessary.

of your Charge, you have the best Claim to his Deference and Regard. Now, Sir, what is this but putting in your Claim to Authority, in *dubious* and *disputable* Points, *i. e.* in Controversies of Faith? Or if you do not chuse to use the Word *Authority*, against which you have expressed such an unconquerable Abhorrence, what other Name will you give it? For as to the Thing itself, it is as clear as the Noon-day Sun. Your Querist's Mind was balancing between opposite Opinions: He could not determine for himself either Way. What was it therefore which did determine him at last? *Authority alone*: For the *Weight* of your Authority (be it more or less) turned the *Scale*; nor can any one justly blame your Conduct in this Respect: On the contrary it ought to be much commended, because you did the best, indeed the *only* Thing which the Nature of the Case would reasonably admit. Nay, I will go farther, and assert in general, that in all Cases whatever, where the Individual is in a *doubting* State, and thinks, that *much may be said on both Sides*, it is natural, I had almost said it is necessary, for him to suffer himself to be guided by those of whom he has the best Opinion; that is, by *Authority*. It is indeed on this single Principle that most of the Affairs of human Life are carried on. For this Reason we consult Lawyers, we advise with Physicians, we ask the Opinion of those of whose Judgment and Veracity

racity we entertain a high Veneration ; and we, many Times, trust our most important Concerns to the Direction of others, sometimes even of Strangers, merely because of their good Character. In short, in such Cases, where we think our own Skill and Knowledge to be incapable of directing us, what else can we do ? And what better Course would you advise us to take ?--- We may be deceived it is true ; Lawyers, Physicians, and others, as well as Priests, or Dissenting Ministers, may prove mere Impostors and false Guides. But what then ? It is surely better in many Cases, where we cannot judge for ourselves, to have *some* Guide, even with the Chance of being sometimes led astray, than to have no Guide at all.

THIS Argument, Sir, being familiar, strong, and clear,---therefore appears to me to be decisive ; but if it should not have the same Effect on *you*, I will endeavour to exhibit a Kind of *negative* Evidence of the same Thing ; an Evidence, wherein both you and I are equally concerned, and which may cause you to see the Affair in a new, and a very striking Point of View, by illustrating in what Instances mere Authority ought NOT to take Place.---I had asserted, that in dubious Cases it is natural, if not necessary, for the Person in *Suspense* to ask Advice, and to rely at last on some Authority or other. And, gene-

rally speaking, the Authority the most proper to rely upon, whether in Church or State; is that of our Superiors. But what if a Case should happen, wherein our own Judgments evidently clash with the Judgments of those above us?—Wherein we have not the least Doubt of the Truth or Falshood of the Proposition,—the Rectitude or Obliquity of the Action? In such a Case as this, it is easy to determine, that mere Authority ought to be superseded; because Authority, as such, can have no Place against *Conviction*. Now this is the very Case both with you and me in regard to your late Petition offered to Parliament, and rejected in the Upper House by a large Majority both of Peers and Bishops. The Peers are undoubtedly your Superiors, as well as mine: And their Lordships the Bishops are my immediate Superintendents. But tho' I would do every Thing, that should imply Deference, Submission, and Respect in all plain Cases, and even in all *dubious* ones; yet in such a Case as this I must beg to be excused: And where I am fully convinced, that I have Truth, yea *most important Truths* on my Side, my Motto, I hope, shall ever be, MAGIS AMICA VERITAS. Mr. Mauduit, yourself, and the Author of that masterly Performance, *An Enquiry into the Principles of Toleration*, have shewn, with a Strength of Argument not to be withstood, that the Rejection of this Petition was inconsistent

sistent with the Rules of Humanity and Justice, with the Principles of the Christian Religion in general, and of consistent Protestantism in particular: And I likewise in my Turn am fully persuaded, I shall be able to prove, that it was equally repugnant to sound Policy, and to the peculiar Interest of the Church of *England*;--- and at the present Juncture, most *unhappily ill-timed*.

HOWEVER, as their Lordships the Bishops are Men of like Passions with ourselves, one Circumstance ought to be mentioned in Extenuation of human Frailty. Too many eminent Writers among the Dissenters have of late given the Clergy in general *unnecessary Provocation*. Had their Lordships interfered in the Years 1719 and 1720 [See your Vindication pages 31---37] when the Dissenting Ministers were engaged in warm Disputes among themselves similar to the present among us, and on the very same Subjects;---had the Bishops, I say, interfered in those Contentions, not as *Peace-makers*, but as *Fomentors* of the Quarrel, I appeal to yourself, what you would have thought of such a Conduct. Why then have you made yourselves Parties and Principals in our domestic Disputes? And is this doing as you would be done by?---You yourself allow that your Cause is totally distinct from that of the Petitioners; and most undoubtedly it is.

For

For whether our Articles had been Calvinistical, or Arminian; whether Trinitarian, Arian, or Socinian; or whether indeed we had no Articles at all, and you chose to have Articles and Creeds of your own making; still you had an equal Right to separate from us, if your Consciences did not permit you to join in religious Worship with us, and to demand the Benefit of a legal Toleration. Be pleased therefore to take Notice, that what I have undertaken to answer, is only the former Part of your Vindication, where you certainly *stept out of your Way*: For as to the latter Part, where you are defending your own Cause; and not the Cause of the Petitioners, and wherever you do not deviate from your Subject, it is excellent, it is unanswerable.

THEREFORE, in regard to this latter Part, give me Leave to return you public Thanks for your Information concerning the Opinion which the Dissenting Clergy had long entertained of the Toleration Act, before their late Application to Parliament; and more particularly for the Account you have given [Pages 14---16] “ That “ it was not only the Wish, but the Design of “ MANY Dissenting Ministers to embrace the first “ favourable Opportunity of attempting to get “ a Deliverance from the Burthen of Subscrip-“ tion.” Would you believe it, Sir! Incredible as it may seem, a most absurd and ridiculous

Story

Story has been propagated, that the Dissenters had never dreamt of applying to Parliament, had not the Dean of Gloucester roused them from their lethargic Insensibility, *by wishing them Success in Case they should apply.*---Not that I think my Conduct needed any Apology, had I really done what is imputed to me; for I hope, I shall never be ashamed of appearing as a Friend to, and an Advocate for, reasonable and consistent Liberty. And surely the Dissenting Ministers who openly declare, that they are *not* Members of the established Church, and who thereby *deprive themselves* of its Emoluments and Preferments, are upon a very different Footing from other Men; from those especially, who having solemnly engaged in its Defence, and accepted its Rewards; yet are indefatigable in plotting its Ruin and Destruction. Surely, I say, if there is such a Thing as a Distinction between Right and Wrong, there ought to be a Difference in the Treatment to be observed towards these two Sorts of Men, the Dissenting, and the Petitioning Clergy. But indeed, had the above obnoxious half Line been expunged out of my Apology, the Case would not have been much mended: For there is not a single Paragraph to be found in the whole Performance, but either directly, or by plain Implication, speaks aloud for Liberty of Conscience, and the Rights of private Judgment. In short, I neither can, nor I trust ever will, attempt to defend

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defend the Protestant Church of *England* on any other than on *Protestant* Ground. And I should be glad to see what Sort of Work those Champions would make of it, who fancy they can maintain her Causē, or support her Credit, on the Principles of Intolerance and Persecution.

BUT to return:—On a Review of the whole Matter, I cannot avoid giving my Opinion, that your Charge of *Weakness* and *Inconsistency* against the Ministers of the Establishment, is not well grounded; and I am almost persuaded, that were you to reconsider the Case, together with all the Circumstances attending it, you would be more disposed to retract, than to persist in your Accusation. In the Infancy of the Reformation in *Germany* (for that was the Country in which the Scene of all these Things were originally laid; and *England* at that Time was little more than an Echo repeating the Sound of the Continent) I say, in the *Infancy* of the Reformation, whilst the Reformers were employed in pulling down, and *before* they had Time to build up; one of the most popular and plausible Objections of the Papists against their Proceedings was this: “That
 “ the Principles and Practices of these pretended
 “ Reformers were inconsistent with the very Ex-
 “ istence of the visible Church of Christ; that
 “ the visible Church must be invested with a
 “ Power to prescribe an external Mode of Wor-
 “ ship

“ ship to all its Members, *i.e.* to ordain Rites
 “ and Ceremonies; against the Exercise of which
 “ Power the Protestants had raised the most tra-
 “ gical Exclamations: Moreover, that the visible
 “ Church must have an Authority sufficient to di-
 “ rect the Consciences, and regulate the Faith of
 “ the Christian World; against which Authority
 “ *Luther* and his Associates were in open Re-
 “ bellion. And therefore, were such wicked
 “ Doctrines and sacrilegious Attempts as these to
 “ succeed, the Consequence would be, that the
 “ visible Church of Christ must be annihilated;
 “ so that there would be no Witness and Keeper
 “ of God’s Word remaining upon Earth; and
 “ the Gates of Hell would necessarily prevail
 “ against her.”

THE Reformers, as soon as ever a fit Opportunity presented, took due Care to explain themselves on these Heads. They first defined what they conceived a visible Church of Christ to be:—
 A Translation of which Definition, about 30 Years afterwards, was *almost* literally given in the 19th Article of our Church, *viz.* * “ The visi-
 “ ble

* Item docent (Protestantes) quod una sancta Ecclesia
 perpetuo manfura sit. Est aut Ecclesia Christi Congregatio
 Membrorum Christi, hoc est Sanctorum qui vere credunt et
 obedient Christo; et si in hac Vita huic Congregationi multi
 mali et Hypocritæ admixti sunt, usque ad novissimum Ju-
 dicium

“ ble Church of Christ is a Congregation of
 “ faithful Men, in the which the pure Word of
 “ God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly
 “ administred, according to Christ’s Ordinance,
 “ in all those Things that of Necessity are re-
 “ quisite to the same.” And after they had de-
 scribed what a visible Church was, they proceeded
 to assert, that such a Church, wherever it exist-
 ed, was, in common with other visible Churches,
 a Witness and a Keeper of Holy Writ :---And
 consequently, if it persevered in this Faith, that
 it must be visible to the End of the World. In
 the mean Time, and during the Term of its Ex-
 istence, it had a Right to appoint a Mode of
 Worship, and to regulate the external Behaviour
 of its own Members in all *necessary* Matters ;---
 Nay farther, it had a Right to influence the

dicium. Habet autem Ecclesia propriè dicta, signa sua,
 scilicet puram et sanam Evangelii Doctrinam, et rectum
 usum Sacramentorum. Et ad veram Unitatem Ecclesiz
 satis est consentire de Doctrinâ Evangelii, et Administratione Sa-
 cramentorum. Nec necessè est ubique similes esse Traditiones hu-
 manas, seu Ritus ab Hominibus institutos. [N. B. The Be-
 ginning of our 34th Article is a literal Translation of this
 last Clause, *viz.* It is not necessary that Traditions and
 Ceremonies be in all Places one, and utterly alike.] See
 the Augsburg Confession presented to the Emperor 1530,
 Article 7. And the same Confession enlarged, from which
 the above Quotation is taken, presented to the Emperor at
 Worms 1540.---Also, Melancthon’s Apology for both Con-
 fessions ;---Item, his Saxonick Confession 1551 ;---and the
 three first of his Answers to the Bavarian Questions 1559 ;
 with innumerable other Places in his Works.

Judg-

Judgments of private Christians in their Doubts and Difficulties respecting *disputable*, or *controvertible* Points of Faith. These were the general Assertions of the Protestants, in order to obviate the Calumnies, and to wipe off the Reproaches of their Adversaries. But be pleased, Sir, to observe, that these Assertions were exceedingly limited, if compared with the Popish Claims. And it is further observable, that the Protestants still added other Restrictious by Way of Caution against Abuse. For they added, that no Rite or Ceremony, no Mode or Form of Worship whatever was to be retained, or appointed, if contrary to the written Word of God;---by which Clause the *English* Reformers more especially meant to abolish the Celebration of the Mass, and the idolatrous Elevation of the Host: Nay, as to those Modes of Worship, those Rites and Ceremonies which are *not* expressly contrary to God's written Word; yet, if they did not tend to Christian Edification; such likewise were to have no Place in a Protestant Establishment:---*

* By which single Clause thousands of Processions, Gesticulations, and other superstitious Fooleries of the Church of *Rome* were to be cut off, and

* If the *English* Reader hath a Mind to see a Catalogue of the grossest of these superstitious Practices, he may find it recorded in the 3d Part of the Homily on Good Works: The Learned Reader may consult *Erasmus*, *Luther*, and *Melanchthon* on the same Subjects.

abolished for ever. And lastly, when they ascribed to the Church an Authority in disputable Points, or in Controversies of Faith, they took Care to subjoin, that this Authority should not extend to the expounding one Passage of Scripture in Contradiction to another; nor to the requiring the Belief of any Article, as necessary to Salvation, which is not to be found in the written Word of God: By which Means they totally excluded the Decisions of the Schoolmen, the Papal Decretals, and the Doctrines of the Canonists relative to the Power of the Pope, and many other such like Matters.

Now here again I must be free to declare, that if this be Popery, I do not understand what Protestantism is. I see as evidently as the Noon-day Sun, that the Protestants were under an absolute Necessity of acknowledging the Existence of a visible Church, the Witness and Keeper of God's holy Word; and that this Church must be invested with such Powers as were necessary for its own Preservation. I see, I say, that the *Germanic* Protestants were under a Necessity, in their Situation, of doing this; otherwise their Adversaries in Disputation would have obtained a sure Victory, and an easy Triumph; and they themselves would have afforded a specious Pretence both to the Pope, and to the Emperor, to have armed all Christendom against them. But if you, Sir, are pleased to think other-

otherwise; if you chuse to say, that the Christian Church differs from all other Societies, in being destitute of those Powers which are necessary for its Existence and Preservation, I will not deny your Right of private Judgment. But I would not advise you to attack a subtle Jesuit, or a shrewd Popish Disputant, with such Kind of Weapons; lest he should prove, that, in order to be *consistent*, you must either return into the Bosom of Mother-Church, or confess that there is no Church of Christ now extant. The antient Protestants saw this dreadful Dilemma; and very judiciously avoided it by observing the happy Medium between both Extremes.

HOWEVER, if the Concession can be of any Service to you, one Thing I will allow, *viz.* That the *English* Protestants, who, in the Reign of *Edward* the 6th had the Government on their Side, were not under such an *absolute* Necessity of making those express Declarations in Favour of a visible Church, and its necessary Powers, as the *Germanic* Protestants were. For the Reformation in *Germany* was, at first, begun by the lower Ranks of People; whose Principles and Proceedings were therefore the more liable to be suspected, and required an Explanation:--- Nay, even at the last, when Electors, Princes, and Imperial Cities joined them, it behoved them to be as much upon their Guard as ever;---

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considering that that they had such a Man as the Emperor *Charles V.* to deal with; a Man, from whose vast Power, and personal Bravery, from whose Wiles and Cunning, and pretended Zeal for Religion, they had every Thing to fear, if they had given him the least Advantage. Nay more, if the *English* Protestants had less Need than the *German*, I will advance one Step farther, and grant also that the present Church of *England* hath still less Occasion than our Forefathers, to make the above Declaration concerning Church-Power, and Church-Authority. And therefore, as we have now a visible Church, regularly established (may it always so continue) I will grant, that in the present happy State of Things, this 20th Article, in common with several others, is become in a Manner, or for the most Part, *superfluous*. Suppose therefore, that at the next Review, whenever that shall happen, this 20th Article was totally abolished:---Not for the Reasons you assign:---Not by Way of *disclaiming* or *renouncing* such Powers, but because there is no urgent Necessity for *claiming* them:---Not because the Ministers of the Establishment might appear to the World *less weak*, or *more consistent* thereby; but because these Ministers, in Pity to the Frailty of their weak dissenting Brethren, would condescend to remove an *harmless Thing* out of their Way, at which they have very frequently, tho' *unnecessarily* taken Offence:---Suppose

pose therefore, I say, that this 20th Article was totally abolished:---And then what would be the Consequence? Just nothing at all. For Things would go on in the very same Course they do now: Not one Ceremony would be retrenched merely on that Account: Nor would the Defence to be paid to the Judgments of the established Clergy in *dubious* and *disputable* Matters, by their respective Congregations, be at all the less. In short, the Necessity of preserving Decency and Order both in your Church, and in ours, must be acknowledged, call the Exercise of that Power by what Name you please: And the Use of Guides and Interpreters, of Teachers and Pastors (*i. e.* the Use of Authority, *properly understood*) cannot be dispensed with, or discontinued, whilst there remains a Church upon Earth. About what then have we been so long disputing? About Words; about different Sounds; when perhaps there was little, or no Difference in what we meant, when properly explained.

BUT as you seemed so desirous of discovering the Seeds of Popery lurking in the *original* Constitution of our Church, I will not altogether disappoint you in that Respect. Popery undoubtedly there was, tho' what you objected to as such, was really and truly *Antipapal*. The Popery consisted in that very absurd and pernicious

nicious Maxim, universally embraced by every Protestant State at first, *viz.* That all the Members of the same State, ought, *on that very Account*, to become the Members of the same Church. They saw very plainly, that there could be no such Thing as a legal Toleration granted to any Subjects whatever, to live in an open Violation of the Laws of their Country. And this is very true in a civil Sense, where civil Obedience, where Matters of Right and Property, and the Protection of Life and Liberty are the only Objects of coercive Law. But they unhappily carried the Principle too far, by extending it to the Duties of Religion, and Matters of Conscience. They considered Non-Conformity to the external Mode of public Worship, and Non-Conformity to the civil Laws of a Country, as one and the same Thing: And therefore they punished both Actions on the same Principle. This it must be confessed was genuine Popery; because it was turning over the Schismatic, or the Heretic to be punished by the civil Magistrate. Whereas, as the Author of the Inquiry into the Principles of Toleration excellently observes,

* “ All who can give good Security to the Government under which they live, and to the Community to which they belong, for the Performance of the Duties of good Subjects

* Pages 21 and 22.

“ and

“ and good Citizens, have an undoubted Claim
 “ to it, and cannot with any just Reason be de-
 “ prived of it. It is not *Error*, but *Injury* to
 “ the State, or to the Individuals which are under
 “ the Care of it, which justifies the Animadver-
 “ sions of the Magistrate ; and all to whom this
 “ cannot be justly imputed, are Objects of his
 “ Protection.”

Now, Sir, will you say, that the antient Puritans reasoned after this sensible, humane, and judicious Manner? You cannot say it ; for the Fact is against you ; and therefore in this Respect it is certainly true, that both Churchmen, and Dissenters were formerly Papists alike. Let us therefore not reproach one another for the Misconduct of our Forefathers ; yea rather, as we have abundantly more Light than they had, let us strive to shew that we are really become Children of Light, by reforming what was amiss in both Parties.

It is indeed wonderful to observe, how nearly our Protestant Ancestors approached to the Truth, without actually discovering it. They came within Sight of Toleration, and yet could not see it. It appears by these very Articles, the 20th and 34th so often quoted, that they reasoned on the Principles of Toleration and Liberty of Conscience justly enough, when they inserted

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the aforementioned Guards and Cautions for the Limitation of Church Authority, and Church Power. Nay, it further appears from the 34th Article, that they saw clearly, that each national Church had a Right to judge for itself, both as to Points of Doctrine, and as to Modes of public Worship. And they do not drop the least Hint, that it was justifiable for the stronger Nation to compel the weaker to adopt its Doctrines and Opinions, or to conform to its Rites and Ceremonies. So far therefore we may observe, that they reasoned fairly and consistently; for they allowed that each State, or Civil Society, acting as an Individual, had a full Right to enjoy its own private Judgment and Liberty of Conscience, against the Pretensions of other States, or other Individuals. How then came it to pass, that they did not adopt the same Train of Reasoning with regard to the Dissenters within the same State, or Nation? It is hard to account for this surprising Phænomenon, this gross Inconsistency in the human Mind. It could not be, that the Protestants then thought (what Hobbs pretended to think in later Times) that the Prince had a Right to compel his Subjects to conform to his own Religion: for if that had been the Case, why so many Outcries against the Persecutions of the Roman Emperors of old, or of *Henry the 8th*, and of *Queen Mary* in their own Times? Nor yet could they (the Reformers) seriously maintain, that the Care of Ortho-

Orthodoxy, and of true Religion devolved to the Magistrate in such a rigorous Sense, as to give him a Right to use coercive Powers over the Lives, Liberties, and Fortunes of his Subjects, in order to promote the Good of their Souls:---For this is in Fact saying the same Thing, only with more *Detours* and Circumvolutions:---And yet some lurking false Principle of this Sort must have given their Minds a most unhappy Bias, and have caused them to have deviated into that strange and contradictory Conduct, which was so universally pursued by the first Protestants respecting Persecution.

THE Magistrate hath undoubtedly a Right to encourage that System of Religion, which he esteems the most orthodox, and the best: Because every Individual has the same Right. But the Magistrate can have no Right, either in his public, or in his private Capacity, to persecute the Followers of any other System, provided they keep the Peace of Society, and offend not against good Morals. In one Word, to *reward* is one Thing, to *punish* is another; Premiums may *win*, but Penalties ought not to *compel*; and Matters of *Favour* must ever be acknowledged to be of a different Nature from Matters of *Right*. This Distinction is certainly the Line, which ought always to be drawn in these Cases. And I will venture to add, that whosoever deviates from it either to the right Hand or to the left, will

I find

find that he is running into endless Difficulties; and that, were he to pursue his System through all its Consequences, he would be led into, not only gross Absurdities, but very horrid Crimes.

Now, Sir, from what hath been said both in this Place, and in several other Parts of this Epistle, you plainly see, that I do not hold forth the National Church, as a Model of all Perfection; and yet I most sincerely declare, that according to the most impartial Judgment which I can form, I do not know a *better*, nor any one *so good*. But penetrated, as I am with this Persuasion, I am still as willing, that others should think differently, as I am desirous of thinking for myself. And therefore with these Sentiments I beg Leave to assure you, that I have the Honour to be,

Reverend and worthy Sir,

Your affectionate Brother,

And most obedient humble Servant,

Glocester, Dec. 10,
1772.

JOSIAH TUCKER.

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SECOND LETTER TO

The Reverend Dr. KIPPIES,

Wherein the Question is discussed, whether the English Reformers in the Reign of Edward VI. intended to establish the Doctrines of Predestination, Redemption, Grace, Justification, and Perseverance, in the Calvinistical Sense, as the Doctrines of the Church of England.

Reverend Sir,


OUR Situation and mine are whimsically odd in relation to the present Dispute about Articles and Subscriptions. You declare against admitting any Authority at all in Matters of Faith or Opinion; and yet you ascribe a great deal (in my humble Judgment a great deal too much) to the Author of the Confessional: Nay,

you

you go farther, and scruple not to declare, that the most celebrated [Arminian] Writers must ever bow to a *Toplady*, or a *Bowman*;---the latest who have wrote on the Calvinistical Side of the Question. Surely this was carrying your Defence to the Performance of these Gentlemen rather too far; seeing it was impossible for you to know what Reply the Arminians were able to make, or what they had to say in their own Vindication.

I, on the contrary, presume to suppose, That where other Arguments are equal, the Weight of Authority alone ought to turn the Scale; and this Maxim I venture to apply to all Cases whatsoever in Church or State, and to all Arts, Sciences, and Professions. Yet Sir, I will waive this Privilege at present: For tho' I write in Favour of present Possession, and have the Majority on my Side, I ask for no Indulgence; I desire no Defence to be paid me on that Account: For if I cannot produce such Arguments, as will both in Weight and Number, evidently turn the Scale against these *unanswerable* Gentlemen, I shall give up the Cause for lost, and hope for no Allowance from the mere Argument of Authority.

THEREFORE, in prosecuting the Inquiry now before us, I shall beg Leave to propose a Method, which appears to me the most unexceptionable,

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and the most impartial that can be devised ; and which, I hope, even you will allow to be a good and fair one ; tho' it doth not come recommended by the Sanction or Authority either of a Dr. *Blackburn*, a Mr. *Toplady*, or a Mr. *Bowman*. The Method is this : First to state the Principles and Opinions of the Doctors of the Church of *Rome* just at, or before, the breaking out of the Reformation : 2dly, to give an Account of the Doctrines and Tenets of the first Reformers, by observing how far they concurred with the Church of *Rome*, and wherein they differed ; also upon what Motives or Reasons these Differences were grounded : And then 3dly, I shall particularly apply this Method towards investigating the Doctrines of the first Reformers of the Church of *England* relative to the Calvinistical Controversy.

THE *quinquarticular* Controversy, (so called from the five Points of Predestination, Redemption, Grace, Justification, and Perseverance) being inseparably linked together, is generally supposed to have acquired that Name much about the Time of holding the Synod at *Dort*. And indeed it is very probable, that the Appellation could not be of a more antient Date ; because the Connection throughout all these five Points was not perceived at the Beginning of the Reformation, much less in Times still more remote ; as I shall have Occasion to shew more than once in the

Course

Course of this Letter. However, it is very certain, that *St. Augustin* in his Zeal against the *Pelagians*, and the *Semi-Pelagians*, laid down the following Positions; and got several of them to be established as *fundamental Doctrines* by Synods and Councils.

" THAT *Adam* was the foederal Head and
 " Representative of the whole human Race:
 " That by his Fall a total Depravity was spread
 " over human Nature:---That the mental Powers
 " were so debilitated and corrupted by this Ca-
 " tastrophe, as to render the Will not only alto-
 " gether insufficient to attain any Thing that is
 " good, but also exceedingly prone to Evil:---
 " That Divine Grace alone must give the Will
 " a Sufficiency of Power and Strength first to
 " overcome this Propensity to Evil, and then
 " to attain to Goodness of Heart and Holiness
 " of Life:---But that God had decreed not to
 " impart this sufficient and saving Grace to all
 " Men in general, but only to a select few, whom
 " he had predestinated to Salvation:---That the
 " rest of Mankind must therefore inevitably
 " perish:---That Baptism is the ordinary Means
 " of conveying this sufficient and salutary Grace:
 " ---Not that all who are baptized are to be
 " reckoned to be of the Number of the Elect,
 " and predestinated to Glory;---but that never-
 " theless Baptism is the only appointed Mode of
 " washing

“ away original Sin;---and that therefore all baptised Infants, who die before committing actual Sin, are therefore saved;---but that all other Infants, dying without the Pale of the Church, of Course must be damned:---Consequently, a *fortiori*, there can be no Salvation for the Adults of the Gentile World; because they have both original, and actual Sins to answer for; and because their very Virtues are not properly good Works, but a Kind of *Shining Sins*, being wrought without Faith in Christ the Redeemer, and without the Operation of the Holy Spirit the Sanctifier.”

SUCH were the Doctrines of the great *St. Augustin*: Of which I shall say nothing more at present, but that they seem to be a strange Mixture of Truth and Falshood; and that the Author of them never could keep himself from running into Extremes; one while, in his Warmth against the *Manechean* System, ascribing too little to the general Corruption in human Nature, which all Men, even the Heathen World, have both seen and lamented;---and at another Time, while pleading against *Pelagius* and his Followers, ascribing so much, as to destroy the Liberty of human Actions, and to introduce absolute Fate and Necessity.

THE *Semi-pelagians*, if their Adversaries had done Justice to their Notions, might have corrected

rected many of these dangerous Positions. Their Principles led them to keep a middle Way between both Extremes; and it is very probable, that if great Pains had not been taken to suppress their Writings, to cavil at, and misrepresent them, they would have handed down their Opinions and their System much after the following Manner:

" THAT whether *Adam* was our Foederal
 " Head, or not, is a Point not sufficiently re-
 " vealed in Scripture: But that human Nature
 " is not at present the same Thing which it was,
 " when it came originally out of the Hands of
 " its gracious Creator, is a melancholy Truth,
 " which Reason strongly suggests, and Scripture
 " plainly testifies. That the Introduction of
 " Evil into the World is ascribed in Scripture
 " to the Fall of Man; but that the same Scrip-
 " tures as plainly declare, That if by one Man's
 " Disobedience *many* were made Sinners, by the
 " Obedience of one Man *many* were made righ-
 " teous; and that in short, whatever Injuries
 " Mankind received by the Fall, these were com-
 " pensated by the Restoration which they re-
 " ceived in Christ Jesus; consequently, that by
 " Virtue of the *inward* restoring Grace, and of
 " the *outward* Atonement, all Mankind are
 " put into a Capacity of fleeing from the Wrath
 " to come; and that no Man can now justly say,
 " that

“ that he is lost, but thro’ his own, proper, *personal* Misconduct.”

THE *Semi-Pelagians* might also have observed, that with regard to God’s general moral Government, this must extend over the highest Orders of Angels and Arch-Angels, as well as over the inferior Parts of the moral and rational Creation : That consequently the Government of *Man* is only a Province within this great moral Empire : And that the Government of *Christians* is still a more peculiar District within this Province.---That as the Holy Scriptures have not been explicit in declaring the Mode or Manner of God’s dealing with the Heathen World in a future State, either as to Rewards, or Punishments ; it becomes us to be the more reserved in our Conjectures :---And that all which we can advance, with any Degree of Certainty, is this, That the Judge of all the Earth will, at the last, *do right* ; nay, that he will shew Mercy and Compassion in all Cases whatsoever, where his Rectitude and Wisdom, and the Honour and Interest of his Government will permit Mercy and Compassion to be shewn. That the Rewards (whatever they shall be) which he will bestow on those Gentiles, who not having a [written] Law, have yet been a Law unto themselves, will be as much the Result of Christ’s Merits, as the Rewards of the most orthodox Christian ; because

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Christ is in Fact the Saviour of all Men, though more especially of those that believe.

AND in respect to the Christian World, as this District is enclosed (if one may so speak) within the Limits of a particular Charter, neither the Privileges, nor the Penalties belonging to it, can be the same with those that are common to the rest of Mankind. For were this the Case, it would be no Inclosure, no distinct Society, or Corporation at all. Therefore it is reasonable to conclude, that the Felicity of the good, and the Misery of the wicked Christian, will be of a distinct Species from that Happiness, or Woe, which shall attend the virtuous, or vicious Lives of those who live without the Pale of the Christian Church.

BUT as to Merit of any Sort, neither the Christian, nor Gentile can have the least Pretensions to it. For every Idea of Recompence, whether covenanted, or uncovenanted, must at last be resolved into the pure Munificence and free Gift of Almighty God through Jesus Christ our Lord.---Indeed a Master on Earth may want the Attendance and Assistance of a good and useful Servant; and therefore such a Servant hath a just Right to plead the Merit of his good Works in order to demand a Recompence. But our heavenly Master doth not stand in Need of

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the Help of any of his Creatures in any Respect whatever. Consequently it must follow in this Sense; That the most perfect Service of the highest Angel must be judged to be * *unprofitable*. Again, a Monarch here below cannot maintain himself on his Throne without the Loyalty and Obedience of his faithful Subjects. And therefore such Subjects have a just Claim to the Honours, Favours, and Privileges which their Princes have to bestow. But the King of Kings and Lord of Lords is under no such Obligation to his Subjects: For were the whole Creation to prove Rebels and Traitors;---his Throne would not be shaken, nor even his Power diminished, by their Conspiracies or Rebellions. And therefore in this Sense again it must likewise follow, that the Loyalty of the very best of his Subjects is *unprofitable*, if considered as adding Security to his Throne, or Strength to his Kingdom.

THEREFORE from these Premises it must follow, that the Worth, or Dignity, or Excellence of good Works is to be derived from some purer Source, than that of real or intrinsic Merit. Faith and good Works are undoubtedly profitable to

* The original Term *Δούλος αὐτοῦ*, literally signifies an *useless Servant*.

ourselves, but not to God. We want them on our own Account; but he doth not on his. They are a necessary Qualification on our Parts; because we are unfit for the Post assigned us, and for the high Calling purchased for us by Christ Jesus, unless we have them. For a wicked Man is every Way *unqualified*, for the Enjoyment of Heaven.

It is indeed a difficult Thing to illustrate this Matter in all its Branches, because we have nothing similar to it in our Dealings one with another, with which it may be compared. And yet such a Case may be stated, as will evidently prove the Necessity of good Works, previous to our Acceptance with God, without allowing them to be the meritorious Cause of our Acceptance. The Holy Scriptures often use the Term Adoption: And as this Idea was borrowed from civil Transactions, frequent in those Times, the Meaning may be supposed to be, that a rich Person admitted a poor one into his Household or Family, in order to make him his Son and Heir, as soon as he should be qualified for that high Station. Suppose therefore, that some great Personage, at the earnest Intercession of his bosom Friend, not only pardoned two miserable Wretches, who had grievously offended him, but also offered to make them Co-heirs in his Family Estate, as soon as they should attain to a Capacity of enjoying it.

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To this End they are both sent to a Place of Education; and have proper Instructors, with all possible Assurances provided for them. One of the two makes no Progress; but turns a deaf Ear to all good Advice, spurning at his Benefactor, and ridiculing the Benefits obtained for him by his Advocate or Intercessor. Whereas the other is just the reverse, and makes such grateful Advancements in the requisite Qualifications, as will enable him to take Possession of the intended Inheritance with Propriety and Reputation. The former of these undoubtedly hath great *Demerit*; and therefore deserves the more exemplary Punishment, in Proportion to the Blackness of his Ingratitude. But surely it doth not follow from hence, that the good Behaviour of the latter is *meritorious* towards his Benefactor, and his Intercessor, whose Bounty and Munificence cannot be eclipsed, or superseded, or even in any Degree diminished in Value by his making a good Use of the Favours conferred upon him; for their Gift is a Gift still *: And it would be a most preposterous Way of reasoning to infer, that his Obligations towards them decreased in Proportion as he became sensible of the Favours and Blessings he received from them.

* See my Sermon, *Salvation by Grace is the Gift of God, lately printed.*

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THUS it is in regard to earthly Things. But the Case is still stronger in Respect to God: For in him we live, move, and have our Being, both in a spiritual and a natural Sense. His enabling, and assisting Grace are beyond the Power of the most generous of Mortals to bestow on their Inferiors. And the Benefits of Redemption and Atonement are as much superior to the Gifts of earthly Benefactors as Creator is to Creature. From all which therefore the Conclusion is irrefragably strong, that there can be no Merit either in our Faith, or our good Works separately, or in both conjunctly; tho' they are the necessary Conditions of our Acceptance here, and the indispensable Preparatives for Heaven hereafter.

I do not say, Sir, that the *Semi-pelagians* always reasoned after this Manner. But I do aver, that they might have drawn out their Creed, or their System, very consistently to this Effect:— And that their fundamental Principles of the Necessity both of preventing [preceding] and assisting Grace, and of the Co-operation of the Will with both, would naturally lead them to these Conclusions, had they been left at Liberty to follow the Dictates of their own Consciences.

BUT, alas! the Zealot *St. Augustin* was too intent on Victory and Persecution to relish any Opinions but his own. 'Tis true, both he and

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Prosper gave better Words to the *Semi-pelagians*, while they retained some Hopes of making Converts of them, than they did to the *Pelagians*; as * *Cardinal Noris* himself is forced to acknowledge. But when these Hopes failed, after the Death of *St. Augustin*, we find, that the softest Appellation which *Prosper* could bestow upon them was, *Calumniatores*, *Lupos occultos*, *Hypocritas*. And Fact it is, that *St. Augustin* and his Followers, for the best Part of two Centuries, caused Synod after Synod and Council after Council to be held, in order to extirpate both the *Pelagian*, and *Semi-pelagian* Heresy, Root and Branch; so that nothing might remain to be believed in the Christian Church, but his own *novel* Doctrine of absolute Decrees, and irresistible Grace. And indeed hardly any Thing besides

* See *Norisi Historia Pelagiana*, Lib. 2, Cap. 5. There is some small Variation between the *Historia Pelagiana* of *Cardinal Noris*, and that of the learned *Vossius*: With which Difference it is not necessary to trouble the Reader. Suffice it to observe two Things; 1st. They both agree, that the Principles of absolute, unconditional Predestination, and of the Irresistibility of Divine Grace were established in a Variety of Synods and Councils (*Vossius* reckons up fifteen in all;) and the contrary Doctrines were condemned, as impious and heretical: 2dly. That *St. Augustin's* Positions were allowed by his warmest Defenders at that very Time to be little better than *Novelties*, if compared with the Writings of the more antient Fathers, especially of the Greek Church. For *they* were all of the *Semi-pelagian* Cast. In short, no Body before *St. Augustin* ever dreamed, that all unbaptized Infants, and the whole Heathen world, were to be consigned to Hell, and the Devil.

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did remain : For we scarce hear of any other Doctrine being taught in the Western Church for several Centuries. Nay, when *Peter Lombard* in the 12th Century composed, or rather collected, his *Summa Sententiarum*, he grafted *St. Augustin's* Notions into his Body of Divinity, forming them into Questions for scholastic Disputations, and then pronouncing definitive Sentences on each Dispute, as the *Magister Sententiarum*, or Moderator of the Dispute between Respondent and Opponent. This Establishment of Opponent, Respondent, and Moderator, with a Set of Questions given out to Dispute upon, was a very singular Institution, to which we find nothing similar either among the Disputes of the wrangling Tribes of Philosophers in *Greece*, or in the Philosophical Works of *Cicero*, and of the other great Men of *Rome*. And as the Institution itself was so very singular, the Origin of it is as little known. Nor can we tell from what Period to date its Beginning. For certain it is, that *Peter Lombard* (tho' vulgarly called the Father of the Schoolmen) was no more the Author of it than *Aristotle* was the Author of all Logic, or *Sir Isaac Newton* of all Mathematics. They all three improved what they found, by advancing their respective Sciences nearer to Perfection; and perhaps they reduced into Method and good Order, what was before more confused, scattered, and indeterminate. But however that be, it is

a most undoubted Fact, that this Book of *Peter Lombard* was in such high Vogue, for several Ages, as to eclipse the Scriptures themselves. For Proof of which, see *Mosheim's History*, Vol. i. English Edit. Page 598, and the Note of Page 600; and therefore we can be at no Loss to know what Doctrines prevailed in those Times in the Schools of Christian Divines.

MOREOVER, when *Thomas Aquinas* the *Dominican*, proceeded on the same Plan, in a greater Work, about a Century afterwards, he not only kept close to his renowned Master, St. *Augustin*, but even improved upon him: For he asserted, that there was a * *physical Predetermination* of the Will, by Way of proving, as it were, how incompatible the absolute Decrees are with every

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* This Expression, in *French*, *Predetermination Physique*, is borrowed from *Le Clerc's Bibliotheque choisie*, Tom. 6, *Vie d'Erafme*: And is justified by the Confession of a most zealous Catholic, viz. *Boyvin* in his Abridgment of *Duns Scotus's Works*; who allows [*See de Gratia Christi, Questio prima*] that the *Thomists* make a Distinction between *sufficient Grace*, and *effectual Grace*; by supposing that there is a *real Influx* belonging to the one, which is wanting in the other. So that in fact, this sufficient Grace, for want of the real Influx, becomes sufficient,— for just nothing at all; having never been able to *save* a single Person from the Beginning of the World. Those who have a Mind to examine more precisely whether the angelic Doctor, as *Aquinas* is called by the Church of *Rome*, was a Calvinist, or not, as to the Predestinarian Controversy, and what

just Idea of human Liberty. For tho' *Thomas Aquinas* mentions in his Writings the Words *Libertas, Voluntas, et librum Arbitrium*, as often as any one, and condemns the Doctrines of Fate and

what he himself says, † about instantaneous Justification, and the Influx of Grace, may consult his Works, viz. *Prima Pars, Quesitio 3ta*, and particularly the 2d, 4th, and 5th Articles of this Question. See also his *Prima Secunda, Quesitio 113*, where particular Notice ought to be taken of the concluding Paragraph of the 3d Article, and the whole of the 7th and 10th Articles.

As to *Duns Scotus*, the next great Leader of the School Divines, and the Founder of the Sect of the *Scotijts*, I have not had an Opportunity of consulting his Works. But I have the Abridgment of *Bayvin*, his zealous and able Defender, now before me. And from him I learn, that *Scotus* was also a Predestinarian as well as *Aquinas*. See his *Tertia Pars Metaphysicæ, de Specibus Entis, Quest. 23. Utrum Prædestination fiat ex prævisione Meritis?* On which Question he observes, *Quod D. Thomas et Scotus tenent, Deum ex purâ Misericordia, supposito originali Peccato, certos quosdam prædestinasse, absque ulla prævisione Meritorum:—Circa alios autem se habuisse negativè, id est, non prædestinasse illos.* And then he tells us with great Joy, That his Master *Scotus* had permitted his Scholars to think differently from himself, if they pleased, in this Point. *Quia tamen Scotus liberum relinquit suis [Scotijts] ut contrarium teneant, si voluerint, dicendo scilicet, Prædestinationem fieri ex prævisione Meritorum elicitorum ex gratia Christi, ut habetur expressè, in 1 dist. 41 quest. un. § Jufitorum in fine, Ideo in conclusione dicemus prævisionem Meritorum Petri causam fuisse predestinationis ejus.* And the good Man finds himself so happy in this Toleration to break loose from Calvinism, that he cannot help repeating it in another

Place

† In regard to the Scripture Doctrine of instantaneous Justification, instantaneous Conversion, and the absolute Assurances of Salvation, see two of my Sermons lately published, viz. different Methods of Conversion, and the Case of the penitent Thief on the Cross.

and Necessity,---yet, if he supposes that the Will is physically wrought upon, and predetermined, it is evident to common Sense, that he grants only in Expression, what he takes away in Reality. For if any human Will is to be predetermined *physically* either to Good or Evil, it can be itself no better than a mere Machine.

AND now, Sir, having descended from the Time of St. *Augustin*, who flourished in the latter Part of the fourth Century, 'till *Thomas Aquinas*

Place, *viz.* *Theologia Scotti*, &c. &c. *prima pars*, *Questio 8va*.
Doctor Subtilis [i. e. *Scotus*] *liberum relinquit contrarium sentire*:--*Quoniam ergo opinio de prædestinatione ex prævisis Meritis, non tollit Libertatem, nec ulli facit Injuriam, immo potius excitat ad bene agendum, IDEO a nobis [Franciscanis, seu Scotistis] tenebitur.*

In regard to Quotations from scarce Books, such as this now before me, which (*scarce as it is in England*) nevertheless has gone thro' 9 Editions at least in Catholic Countries, mine being the 9th printed at *Venice* in 1734, I must here observe once for all, that I have been doubly unfortunate, respecting these Things. For first, I have not the Convenience of consulting public Libraries of any note or Consequence; and 2dly, having deposited the Collection of Books and Tracts, which I had formerly made, relative to these Points, in a Library then erecting,---I now find, that the most Part of these Books were thrown aside as *useless Lumber*, on subsequent Revisals; so that they cannot be recovered, when wanted. This I thought necessary to mention, by Way of requesting the learned Reader's Indulgence and Excuse, if he should find some Inaccuracies in Names and Dates, and should discover a few Errors in citing Quotations and Authorities. I have myself detected some Mistakes of this Kind committed by me in my Apology, which I have corrected in my 2d Edition. The learned Reader may perhaps correct more.

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who wrote in the thirteenth, let us still come lower down, *viz.* to the fourteenth Century ;--which is nearly the Space of a thousand Years.--Here we find the celebrated *Duns Scotus* planning a new, subtle and laborious Work, in order to rival the Fame, and, if possible, to eclipse the growing Greatness of the angelic Doctor *Thomas Aquinas*. Here therefore, if any where, we may expect to find, the Predestinarian Doctrine of *St. Augustin* contradicted, and the *Semi-Pelagian* set up in its Stead. But even *Scotus*, who was certainly moved with a Desire of putting himself at the Head of a new Sect, by contradicting *Thomas Aquinas* in every Thing, found the Doctrines of the absolute Decrees so strongly entrenched behind a Rampart of Synods and Councils, and of the Bulls of Popes, and of Imperial Constitutions, that he dared not attack it. Therefore all that he could venture to do, was to permit his Scholars to question the Truth of the Doctrine, when they should see occasion : Which Concession nevertheless they did not actually make Use of 'till Ages afterwards ; that is, 'till the Times subsequent to the Reformation.

HENCE therefore it evidently follows, that the whole Western Church, before the Reformation, was Augustinian (if I may be permitted to use the Term) as to the Points of Predestination, Grace, Free-Will, and Perseverance. And if

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it was Augustinian, it could not avoid being Calvinistical ; because in reality there is no Difference. Indeed I will allow, that the *Augustinians*, and *Dominicans*, and even the *Jansenists* of the present Church of *Rome*, pretend to find out a mighty Distance, and several important Distinctions, between the Tenets of St. *Augustin* and those of *Calvin*. But how do they succeed ? And what do they prove ?---They prove that the same identical Doctrine may be expressed by various Ways ; and that smooth Words and soft Phrases will satisfy those who prefer the Honour of that particular Sect or Party, in which they are inlisted, to the Truth of Things. But they never can prove, that the Doctrine itself is really different, because it happens to be expressed in harsher Terms by some, or in gentler Language by others ; and therefore I will allow further, that from the Time of St. *Augustin* to the Dawn of the Reformation, some few Persons, such as *Godschal*, *Wicklif*, and others, were censured for expressing this Doctrine of absolute unconditional Predestination in Words which were too shocking, because too intelligible. But bating the Offensiveness of the Expression, the Doctrine itself is the very same, when plainly and undisguisedly uttered by a *Wicklif*, a *John Hus*, or a *Jerom of Prague*, as when refined and softened by the artful Pen of a St. *Augustin*, of an angelic Doctor, a *subtile*, a *profound*, or a *seraphic* Doctor.

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Nay, so far was the Church of *Rome*, even at, and some Time after, the Reformation, from receding from these Principles, that the Founder of the Jesuits, *Ignatius Loyola*, made it a Part of his * Foundation-Statutes, to initiate his Disciples in the Doctrine and Divinity of *Thomas Aquinas*. Now these Statutes were approved of, and confirmed by several Popes; and it is a Fact well known among the Learned, that *Bellarmino* himself, *Suarez*, and the first Flight of Jesuits were all Predestinarians. Therefore, as the Jesuits both look upon themselves, and are esteemed by others (Papists, as well as Protestants) to be the Pope's *Gens d' Armes*, or Body-Guard, it is evident, to a Demonstration, that had the Church of *Rome* been otherwise than Calvinistical at that Period, the Pope's Life-Guard Men would have been sent to some other Magazine, than to that of *Thomas Aquinas*, for their Arms and Accoutrements. Indeed in succeeding Times the Jesuits perceived their Error in thus joining Popery and Calvinism together; and therefore †*Aquaviva*, the next General of their Order, got

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* Constitutionum cum declarationibus quarta pars, caput XIV. de libris qui prælegendi sunt. immo Generatim (ut dictum est, cum de collegis ageretur) illi prælegentur libri, qui in quavis facultate solidioris ac securioris doctrinæ habebantur.—In Theologia legetur vetus et novum Testamentum, et doctrina scholastica *Divi Thomæ*.

† Declaratio in cap. 14to. B. 5. Praelegetur etiam Magister sententiarum [scilicet Petrus Lombardus] sed si videatur

the Plan of their Education altered, in order to render it, as he expressly declares, *temporibus accommodatior.*

BUT this, you see, Sir, was a subsequent Thought; being a Measure, into which the Papists were forced by the visible Advantage which *Luther*, *Calvin*, *Zanchius*, and other Predestinarians had over them, by turning their own Weapons, that is, their own Saints, their own Councils, their own Popes, and their own Schoolmen against themselves. And therefore I lay it down, as a *most solemn Truth*, notwithstanding-

retur temporis decursu alios autor fludentibus utilior futurus, ut si aliqua summa, vel liber Theologiæ Scholasticae conficeretur, qui *bis temporibus accommodatior* videretur, gravi cum concilio, et rebus diligenter expensis per viros, qui in universa societate aptissimi existimentur, cumque præpositi generalis approbatione, *prælegi poterit.*

Having the Institutes of the Jesuits now before me (a Book heretofore remarkably difficult to obtain) it may not be amiss to acquaint the learned Reader with a curious Anecdote relating to this famous Society. It seems that there is a standing Regulation in the Church of *Rome*, confirmed by several Popes, That none of the Mendicant Orders shall be permitted to erect Houses or Colleges nearer to one another than the Distance of one hundred and forty Cannæ, [the Measure of a Canna I take to be the Length of a walking Cane] doubtless on the Principle of preventing the *common from being overstocked with too many cattle grazing upon it.* But the Jesuits (who are likewise a Mendicant Order) got a Bull in the Year 1560, from Pope *Pius* to dispense with the Rule in regard to them. It is incredible how much Envy and Ill-Will this Partiality in Favour of the Jesuits has excited in the other Orders. They have pursued them ever since with everlasting Hatred, and were one principal Cause of their late Downfall.

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ftanding the senseless Cry of Popery and Arminianism ;----a Cry, which was first invented by angry Men, bent on Revenge in turbulent Times, and then retained by an Herd of ignorant Zealots, and is now revived by the Author of the Confessional (with what View is not difficult to discover ;)--I say, I lay it down as a *most solemn Truth*, that at the Time just preceding the Reformation, the Chturch of *Rome*, in respect to Predestination, Grace, Free-Will, and Perseverance, was *truly Calvinistical*.

BUT in reciting these Points of Calvinism, be pleased to tak Notice, that I do not include *Justification* in the Number. And the Reason is, because the Schoolmen and the Doctors of the *Romish* Church in general held this one Article in flat Contradiction to all their other Tenets. For whereas they should have said, according to the Calvinistical Plan, that good Works could not possibly precede Justification, they maintained not only the Possibility of their Existence, but even insisted on the intrinsic Merit of them. Thus for Example, the good Works of an Heathen, acting on heathen Principles, had in them a *Merit of Congruity*; and the good Works of a Christian, acting on Christian Principles, a *Merit of Condignity*. Which technical and scholastic Terms have been thus well and familiarly explained. *Fac emere prædium, &c.* Suppose you

you want to buy an Estate, and you offer the full Value for it in *unstamped* Bullion, alias in *Merit of Congruity*; a Merit which is of such a real Worth as in Reason and Equity (or as the Moderns phrase it, in the *Fitness of Things*) ought to be considered as equivalent to the Estate to be purchased; nevertheless you cannot actually purchase it, because the present Proprietor hath not promised that he is disposed to part with it. Suppose again, that you and the Proprietor have had a *previous Convention* on the Subject, in which he solemnly engaged that he would part with it on a proper Consideration: Then you offer him the full Value in *current* and *lawful* Coin, alias in *Merit of Condignity*;--- and in Consequence thereof, as you have now made him a *legal Tender*, you have the Estate made over to you by a double Title, the one *ex congruo*, and the other *ex pacto*, or in plain *English*, the one according to Equity, and the other by lawful Conveyance.

I know indeed, that some of the Expressions of the Schoolmen on this Head are capable of a more rational, and a less exceptionable Interpretation: And that the later Writers in the *Romish* Church have taken inexpressible Pains to explain away the most offensive Parts of these arrogant Pretensions to human Merit. But nevertheless all the first Protestants to a Man understood

them to have literally asserted, as I have explained it, *viz.* that there is a true and proper Merit in good Works ;---even such a Merit as is an adequate Purchase for the Favour and Happiness which God has to bestow in another World. And truly *Bellarmino* himself, cautious as he was, gave too much Countenance to this very Notion*. For he says, that the Ratio between human Merit and eternal Life is in a just and fair Proportion. But that nevertheless God would not have been obliged to have made over eternal Life for this Consideration, had he not bound himself over by Covenant so to do. Tho' the Merit in itself be fully adequate to the Reward :---*Quamvis par et equale Mercedi.*

HERE, Sir, you plainly see, that mention is made of a certain Price to be given for Heaven;

* Non desunt qui censeant opera bona iustorum esse meritaria vitae eternae ex condigno ratione operis, etiam si nulla extaret divina conventio. Ita enim docet Cajetanus in 1. 2. que. 114. artic. 3tio. [This Cajetanus was the very Man, whom Pope Leo the 10th made his Legate, and sent into Germany to condemn Luther.] Alii contra existimant opera ex gratia procedentia non esse meritaria ex condigno ratione operis, sed tantum ratione pacti. Nobis media sententia probabilior esse videtur, quae docet opera bona iustorum meritaria esse vita eternae ex condigno pacti, et operis simul: Non quidem quod sine pacto vel acceptatione non habeat opus bonum proportionem ad vitam eternam, sed quia non tenetur Deus acceptare ad illam Mercedem opus bonum, quamvis par et equale Mercedi, nisi conventio interveniat. Bellarmini Controversiae, Tom. 4. Liber quintus de Justificatione, cap. 17.

and

and of that Price being at PAR ; which surely is a most extravagant Position. But this is not all ; for when we add (as add we must on Popish Principles) the Doctrine of Supererogation to this of Merit, we then make the Account to swell vastly higher ; we then set the Price, to be paid for Heaven, ABOVE Par ; and consequently we create a Surplus of Merit ; which Surplus, it seems, the Church has a Right to transfer for the Use and Benefit of those who happen to be deficient in this Kind of Payment, and cannot rise to Par : And thus we are come at last to the very Point, which was the first Motive for beginning a Reformation in Germany in the Year 1517 ; I mean, this Transfer of Merit by the Sale of Indulgences. The scandalous Manner in which this Traffic was carried on by Pope Leo X. and his Agents, shocked the whole Christian World. All cried out shame ! All wished that some Stop might be put to it ! But Luther alone begun the Opposition. And his Opposition at first went no farther than to censure the indecent and indiscreet Manner of retailing this *adulterated Commodity, and cheating the People. By De-

* I call it an *adulterated* Commodity ; because as the judicious and impartial *Courayer* very justly observes in the Notes of his Translation of *Sleidan*, Indulgences at the very best can only be Dispensations from, or Mitigations of, Censures in Ecclesiastical Courts, and have nothing to do with any other Causes even in this Life, much less in a next.

grees

grees, he went farther, and attacked the Principle itself, on which this gainful Trade was built. " If there was no such Thing as Merit, there could be no *Surplus* of Merit; and if no Surplus, there could be no Transfer; consequently, if no Transfer, the Sale of Pardons and Indulgences, founded on this supposed Transfer, must of Course fall to the Ground." All this was very plain and obvious ; and no Person alive could misapprehend the Force of it. But alas ! *Martin Luther*, as I said before, was an *Augustinian* in Principle (nay, he was of the Family of St. *Augustin*, being an *Augustin* Monk) and he had been bred up in the School Divinity of *Thomas Aquinas*. How then was he to prove, that there was no such Thing as human Merit ? Not, as it is attempted to be done at Pages 74 and 75 of this Treatise, by shewing, that a dependent Creature, who enjoys every Thing by mere Bounty, cannot properly merit from an independent, all-sufficient Creator ; and that good Works are required of us only for our own Sakes in this World, and as Qualifications or Preparatives for participating of those Joys which are purchased for us in the next ; but not at all as the original meritorious Causes of our Admittance. Nothing of this Kind entered into his Head : But he cut the Matter short, by having recourse to the Principles in which he had been educated, of absolute

un-

unconditional Election, and *irresistible Grace ; which Sentiments he expressed with his usual Frankness and Intrepidity, and without any Reserve, Colouring, or Disguise. And these Positions, it must be owned, would have done his Business most effectually, had they been true : Because if there be no such Thing as a State of Probation, and a Freedom of Choice, there can be no such Idea as that of Merit in any Sense ; and therefore all the Dispute about the Transfer of a Surplus of Merit, by the Sale of Indulgences, would have been quite idle and superfluous. But the Misfortune was, that in finishing the Controversy after this Manner, an End must likewise be put to the Morality, or Immorality of all human Actions ; and therefore such a Remedy was certainly worse than the Disease.

* There is a Sense, in which it may be allowed on the Semi-pelagian, or Arminian System, that Grace is irresistible : But it is a Sense that can do no Manner of Service to the Cause of Calvinism. Grace for Instance, especially preventient, or preventing Grace, may be considered as a previous Gift or universal Endowment ; like the common Gifts of Health, Strength, or Beauty, Wit, or Understanding. In which Case, the Recipient must necessarily receive them ; for he has not a Power to refuse. But after he has received them, he may chuse whether he will apply them to any Good and salutary Purposes, or not : And on this Freedom of Choice rests the proper Distinction between Good and Evil, Virtue and Vice, Morality and Immorality. Grace therefore must be received ; but after it is received, it may be abused : The Talent may be hid in a Napkin, and the Spirit may be quenched, or have a Despise done to it.

MANY

MANY sober, sensible, and thinking Persons were greatly shocked at these Positions, and contracted an Aversion to the Reformation on that Account. For the Popish Doctors, who had in Reality maintained the same Opinion with *Luther*, only in a more indirect and disguised Manner, raised a most terrible Outcry against him. At last *Erasmus*, who never had loved the Divinity of the Schools, and would have been glad to have seen a Reformation conducted on better Principles, undertook to confute this *Fatalist* in Form. And therefore published his Diatribe about the Year 1524, wherein he observed, That *Luther* seemed to be fond of driving out one Evil by introducing another. *Id genus Hyperbolis delectatus videtur Lutherus, ut aliarum Hyperbolas, veluti malum nodum, quod dici solent, malo cunæo propellere.* Therefore the Purport of this Treatise was, to keep clear of both Extremes, by asserting the Necessity both of Divine Grace, and of Free-Will, conjointly in the Business of Salvation: And by proving, from a vast Variety of Texts of Scripture, collected both out of the Old and New Testament, that neither of them could be allowed to be sufficient alone, and independent of the other. He readily granted, that there had been an universal Fall; but he insisted likewise as strongly, that there was an universal internal Restoration of mental Powers, as well as an outward Redemption, obtained by the Merits

of Jesus Christ; and that therefore the Consequences of the former ought never to be considered, be reasoned upon, or argued from, without considering likewise the Benefits of the latter.

BUT the impetuous *Luther*, far from cooling in his Notions, or growing more moderate in his Sentiments by the Perusal of this Work, answered it the next Year, *viz.* 1525, in a most flaming Manner; and gave such a Title to his Answer, as encreased the Prejudices of many serious Persons against him. The Title was, *De Servo Arbitrio*: And the Book was answerable to the Title; for he insists over and over, that Free-Will is a mere empty Sound, which never had, nor could have had, any Existence: And is very angry, that it could be supposed of him, that he ever was of a contrary Opinion. *Erasmus* had complimented him, for the good he had done in rooting out the Notion of the Merit of Pilgrimages, Processions, and such Kinds of superstitious Trumpery: And then supposed, that when he was so zealous and active in this good Work of Reformation, he must have thought, that Free-Will was of *some Use* in the Conduct of human Actions *.

Erasmus

* Non patior me insimulari ejus Hypocrisis, ut aliter sentiam, et aliter scribam, nec defensionis calore (ut tu scribis de me) *huc sum, ut nunc primum negem totum liberum arbitrium,*

Erasmus replied to this *Servum Arbitrium* in the Years 1526 and 1527, in a Treatise, which he styled *Hyperaspistes*; in which he but too plainly proves, that he could dip his Pen in Gall as well as *Luther*, when provoked so to do. However this last Piece put an End to the Altercation: For I cannot find, that *Luther* ever attempted to confute it. And what is still more, it is very evident, that *Luther's* best Friends, and *Melancthon* in particular, began to forsake him on this Occasion. Nay, it is even insinuated by the Writers of those Times, that *Luther* himself relaxed much, as he grew older, from his former Notions of rigid Fate and absolute Predestination. But be that as it may, one Thing is certain, that in the Year 1530, when the first Confession of the Protestants was to be presented to the Emperor *Charles V.* he was not trusted with the Care of drawing it up,---that Province having been committed to *Melancthon*: And the Manner in which *Melancthon* executed this important Commission, plainly shews, that he had greatly profited (tho' he did not acknowledge it in direct Terms) by this very Treatise of *Erasmus* on

bitrium, qui antea nonnihil illi tribuerim. Nec hoc tu uipium mihi in libellis meis ostendes, scio. Extant Thematata, et Problemata, in quibus perpetuo asserui usque in hanc horam liberum arbitrium esse NIHIL, et rem (eo verbo tum utebar) de solo TITULO. Lutheri opera Tom. tertius, Jenæ Edit: 1603. p. 217.

Free-Will.

Free-Will. For had *Erasmus* himself been to have composed this Confession, I do not see how he could have done it more agreeably to his own Principles; as far, I mean, as the present Points are concerned. But as the Diatribe of *Erasmus*, and this Confession of *Augsburg*, are both before the learned World, let the fair, candid, and impartial Reader judge for himself.

FROM *Germany*, let us now turn our Eyes to *England*, where *Erasmus* had great Patrons, many Friends, and a large personal Acquaintance: To the principal of whom he made * Presents of

N this

* Whether *Erasmus* made a present of this Treatise to *Cranmer*, or not, is a Point which cannot easily be determined at this Distance of Time: But that *Cranmer* was in Possession of this very Edition, printed at *Antwerp*, before he was promoted to the Archbishopric, that is before the Year 1533; and that he had read it over very carefully is evident from hence; that *Cranmer's* own Book is now in the *British Museum*, and signed by himself, *Thomas Cranmer*, and that he underscored several principal Passages with red Ink, particularly that famous Observation of *St. Peter*, quoted by *Erasmus*; “In which [speaking of the Writings of *St. Paul*] are some Things hard to be understood, “which they, that are unlearned and unstable, wrest to “their own Destruction.” Now, whether *Cranmer* used this to express his Approbation, or Disapprobation of the Pre-destinarian Doctrines, or from some other Motive the intelligent Reader will easily judge †. But further it appears from Bishop

+ I have endeavoured to give some Rules for interpreting and understanding these difficult Passages of *St. Paul* in my first Sermon lately printed, *viz.* On the Potter and the Clay.

of this very Book as soon as it was printed. The Book was printed in the Year 1524, the very Year in which *Luther* wrote his Commentary on the *Galatians*. And *Edward* the 6th came to the Throne in 1547. Now during this Interval of 23 Years, we may reasonably conclude, that the *English* Reformers were not idle; and that the Doctrines of Predestination, Grace, Free-Will, and Redemption, were frequently the Subjects of their most serious Thoughts, and coolest Attention. They had likewise one peculiar Advantage over the Reformers on the Continent, of which, we ought to suppose, they made a very proper Use; viz. they were not engaged in personal Altercations with the chief Champions on either Side: They had therefore Time to cool, and Leisure to weigh and examine the Pretensions of each Party, and might at last select those Treatises, which they esteemed the most judicious, for the Use of their infant Church-Establishment.

Bishop *Burnet's* History, Book 3, Page 278. Fol. Edit. 1705, That when *Cranmer* had been about seven Years Archbishop, viz. in the Year 1540, he and other Bishops and Divines, at the King's Command, put forth the *Erudition of the Christian Man*: In which Treatise the Doctrines of Grace and of Free-Will are explained in a Sense entirely conformable to that of *Erasmus*, and diametrically opposite to that of *Luther*. And *Melancthon's Loci Communes*, viz. those of a Date later than the *Augsburgh Confession*, proceed entirely from the same Plan.

ACCORD.

ACCORDINGLY we find, that as soon as *Edward's* Government was settled, many important Things were done by them: For they composed and published a Set of Homilies this very Year: They also ordered an *English* Bible, together with a Paraphrase on the New Testament, to be set up in all Churches throughout the Realm. And they gave a strict Charge to the Bishops to see these Things punctually executed in their respective Dioceses. Now, whose Writings do you think those were, which they ordered to be set up in all Churches for the Purposes of instructing both Clergy, and Laity in the true Sense of Scripture, and in the just Principles of the Reformation? Not *Luther's* Commentary on the Galatians, though that had been published 23 Years before; nor yet *Calvin's* Institutes, though that was likewise in being; but the Paraphrase of that very Man, *Erasmus*, who had confuted them both. *And can you wish or desire

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* This Circumstance has ever been an insuperable Argument against those who impeach the Arminian, or Semi-pelagian Clergy with holding Doctrines contrary to their Subscriptions: And the Method which our Adversaries take to elude the Force of it (for they can never answer it) is this: " If, say they, you ground so much on this Circumstance of ordering the Paraphrase of *Erasmus* to be set up in Churches, " as to suppose, that *Cranmer, Ridley, &c. &c.* intended to " establish the Semi-pelagian Plan instead of the Augustinian, " you must go farther, and assert, for the very same Reason, " that

a stronger Proof that our Reformers were not Calvinists, as to the Calvinistical five-point Controversy, than this now before us? Surely you cannot :—Therefore to proceed: The Year following a new Liturgy was composed; and in the Year following that, this Liturgy was confirmed by Parliament. Moreover the Articles (then Forty-one in Number) were set forth in the Year 1551, and the Liturgy was revised, corrected, and improved the same Year.

TAKING

" that they intended to establish the *Arian* instead of the *Trinitarian*: For *Erasmus* was not untainted with Arianism." Now to this I reply, 1st, It by no Means appears to a common Reader of the Paraphrase, that *Erasmus* was tainted with Arianism. Thousands, and tens of Thousands might read it, without entertaining any such Suspicion. Nay *Gardiner* himself, in his Examination before the Council (see *Burnet's Hist.* Vol. 2. P. 25.) did not object to it on that Account. 2dly. Granting that *Erasmus* was suspected of Arianism by some of his keen-sighted Adversaries, he certainly never wrote professedly on that Side of the Question; he never ventured into a Paper-war with any Trinitarian on that Account; and therefore this Case is by no Means parallel with that of his writing professedly against the Lutheran *enslaved* Will, and the Calvinistical Doctrines. 3dly. Granting further, that it was generally known, that he was suspected of Arianism (which is by no Means true) still it is to be observed, that *Cranmer*, *Ridley*, &c. &c. took Care to put in a Caution in this Case, which they did not so much as attempt to do in the other: For they introduced the Athanasian Creed into the Liturgy, by Way of silencing all Objections that could possibly arise on that Head. Now certain, I think, it is, that the Athanasian Creed never had a Place in any Liturgy but in the *English*; nor can I account for the Introduction of it into the *English* on any other Principles, but these now mentioned.

As

TAKING therefore all these Things together, *viz.* the Homilies,---the Paraphrase of *Erasmus*, ---the Liturgy,---and the Articles of Religion, let us draw up a Summary of the whole, as far as the Points under Consideration are therein concerned.

IN regard to *Predestination*;---from the Year 1547, to the Year 1551, a total Silence was observed concerning that capital Article:---A Silence the more remarkable, as the *Augustan* Confession, drawn up by *Melancthon* thirty Years before, had observed the same Silence. And

As to the Design of the Reformers to inculcate the Necessity of Good Works as well as Faith, as the Conditions of Salvation, they not only recommended the Paraphrase of *Erasmus* for that Purpose, but they also caused a symbolical Representation of the same Doctrine to be exhibited always before the Eyes of the People. It was customary in the preceding Times to place the consecrated Wafer in a Pyxis or Box on the Altar; from whence it was taken out on certain Occasions, (*viz.* at the Elevation of the Host) to be the Object of the Adoration of the Congregation. But when the Reformers removed these Superstitions, they ordered the Creed and the Ten Commands, the one representing *Faith* and the other *Works*, to be placed in their Stead.—Undoubtedly other Portions of Scripture might have been more proper than these, if considered as relative merely to the Celebration of the Eucharist; but none so proper for the Purposes they intended, *viz.* to inculcate the Necessity of Good Works, as well as Faith, and to take off all Imputation of Solifidianism.—Not to mention, that the second Commandment, which forbud the Worship of any Creature whatever, was another Inducement. This Instance of the Creed and the Ten Commandments being set up over the Altar is, I think, peculiar to our *English* Churches.

yet

yet it is an Article in itself, which a true Calvinist would have insisted on, prior to any other; because it is indeed in *his Sense* the Master-Key to all the rest. Nay, when at last our Reformers, out of mere Complaisance to those otherwise truly great and valuable Men, *Bucer* and *Peter Martyr*, condescended to give this Doctrine of Predestination a Place among the Articles, how was it inserted? And doth it appear to have been done with an hearty good Will? See the Words themselves; and judge whether they are drawn up, as *Luther*, or *Calvin*, or *Zanchius* would have done, had they the framing of this Article. But above all, after it was inserted, see, I pray you, what doth the whole amount to?---A little, a very little Concession was made merely to please these learned Men.---And yet no sooner was it made, but withdrawn again by a subsequent Clause in the same Article, lest our *English* Reformers should have carried their Complaisance too far. Now this subsequent concluding Clause of the 17th Article deserves a more especial Regard, as it plainly refers to a Paragraph in the Saxon Confession, published *the same Year*, by the above-mentioned *Melanchthon*, who kept up a continual Correspondence with *Cranmer*, and who was to have presented this very Confession to the Council of *Trent*.

“ AND because (faith he) we propose to ad-
“ minister

“ minister Consolation to the Consciences of the
 “ Penitent, we forbear any Questions about
 “ Predestination or Election. We lead all our
 “ Readers to the Word of God, and desire them
 “ to learn his Will from his own Word.---And
 “ not to search after other Speculations.

“ Most certainly as the Preaching of Repen-
 “ tance relates to all Men, and implies an Accu-
 “ sation against all, so the Promise is universal ;
 “ and the Offer of Forgiveness is made to all,
 “ according to those general Declarations of
 “ Holy Writ ; Come unto me, all ye that travel,
 “ and are heavy laden, and I will give you Rest.
 “ Whosoever believeth in him shall not perish,
 “ but have everlasting Life :---The same Lord
 “ over all, is rich unto all that call upon him :---
 “ God hath concluded all in Unbelief, that he
 “ might have Mercy upon all.

“ In these universal Promises, let each Person
 “ believe, that he himself is included, and not
 “ give Way to Despair : Let every one strive to
 “ obey the Word of God, and follow the Sug-
 “ gestions of his Holy Spirit, praying earnestly
 “ for Assistance, according to that Saying of the
 “ Evangelist St. Luke : How much more will he
 “ give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.”
 [§. *De Remissione Peccatorum, et de Justificatione.*]

As

As to the other Points of this Controversy, they are plainly these :

1. THAT the Fall of Man, and the Introduction of Evil, was universal ; an Infection so general that none escaped it.

2. THAT by this Fall the human or mental Powers were so weakened and corrupted, that Man of himself, or by his mere natural remaining Powers, cannot turn himself unto God, and do good Works fit for eternal Life.

3. THAT Christ gave himself a Ransom to save all Mankind, one as well as another ; and therefore, that he has procured for them the proper Means of Grace in this Life, as well as the Hopes of Glory in the next.

4. THAT in Consequence of this general Atonement, Mankind are restored to a Sufficiency of Strength by Means of the preventing [prevenient] Grace of God : *For he is indifferent to all* (saith the Homily) *and casteth none away.* So that every Man is enabled to begin, and may, and shall receive larger Portions of Grace, and greater Assistance, in Proportion to his proper Use of these preceding Blessings.

BUT 5. That these Blessings are *not* of such a nature, as never to be lost or forfeited ; because
there

there is a Danger of falling away: And when we make a wrong Use of the Grace and Favour of God, he is then provoked to withdraw them from us, and to leave us to perish in the Sin and Misery of our own procuring.

THESE, I say, are the Points evidently deducible from the Premises above mentioned; and if these are Calvinistical, I have yet to learn what is Calvinism.

But here, as at Page 88, no mention is made as yet, of *Justification*; and I dare say, you would be willing to know the Reason. The Reason, alas! is this: The first Protestants in general, and more particularly the Reformers of the Church of *England*, were so entangled in the scholastic Notions of *Merit*, and *Demerit*, and of the Proportions of Rewards and Punishments to each, that they did not know how to extricate themselves out of this Labyrinth. If, say they, evil Works have a Demerit, and therefore deserve to be punished, we must allow, that good Works have a proper Merit, and consequently ought to be rewarded. Hence therefore they were prodigiously at a Loss, how to steer a straight Course, or what Answer to return to the Objections of their Adversaries; * and at last, it

O must

* For a Confutation of the Notion of Merit of any Kind
whether

must be confessed, that they succeeded but very lamely.

FOR Example: 1. In regard to the Works of an Heathen, acting on Heathen Principles, which is the *meritum de congruo* of the Schools [See Article 13] They asserted, that there could be no Merit in such Works as these; *because* they were not done as God had willed and commanded them to be done;---God having willed and commanded all Mankind every where to repent, and to believe the Gospel: And therefore the Works of the Heathen World, not proceeding from a right Principle, Faith in Christ the Redeemer, *i. e.* not being done, as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, had in them, instead of Merit, the *Nature* of Sin. Where be pleased to observe, that they did not call the Works of a virtuous Heathen *sinful* Works, or *wicked* Deeds, Vices, or Immoralities, but only that they had the *Nature* of Sin; hoping to hide their own Ignorance of the Matter by this soft and gentle Expression. [What they should have said, *if indeed they had said any Thing at all*, was this,--That the Works of the uncovenanted Heathen World, either as to Rewards or Punishments,

whether *de congruo*, or *de condigno*, see the former Part of this Letter, Pages 74—78. See also my Sermon on the Unprofitable Servant, lately printed.

are

are Works, *sui generis* :---In relation to which it doth not become the Members of the Christian Church to judge, or determine any Thing about them ;---any farther than to assert in general, that the Judge of all the Earth is a Judge, who acts upon those Principles, where Mercy and Truth must meet together, and where Righteousness and Peace will kiss each other; and therefore at last, he will certainly do right. Indeed, had our Reformers said, that the Works of those Persons, who, living among ourselves, nevertheless obstinately *reject* the Gospel, when fairly and fully proposed to them, and who do Works seemingly good, by Way of Bravado, and in Opposition to the Gospel Motives ;---had they said, that these Works have the Nature of Sin, I should, I confess, have been of their Opinion : And I hope and believe, notwithstanding what has been inconsiderately said by very incompetent Judges, that there is not a *Christian* Teacher in the Kingdom, either in the Establishment, or out of it, but would have maintained the same Doctrine :---So much therefore as to the *Meritum de congruo.*]

2dly. In respect to the *Meritum de condigno*, or the Works of a Christian acting according to Christian Principles. Here again the Reformers were unhappily as much involved, as in the former Case; not being able to disentangle them-

elves

selves, any otherwise than by declaring, that the Works of a Christian have no Merit in them, *because they are imperfect Works*: The necessary Consequence of which is, that the Works of an Angel, if perfect, must be truly meritorious; and moreover, that were we Mortals to do our Duty, or all that is commanded of us to do, our own Works would then become meritorious likewise. “ Let us, (saith the Homily in the second Part of the Sermon of the Misery of Man)

“ Let us know our own Works, of what IM-
“ PERFECTION they be, and then we shall not
“ stand foolishly and arrogantly in our own Con-
“ ceits, NOR CHALLENGE any Part of Justifica-
“ tion by our Merits, or Works. For truly
“ there be *Imperfections* in our best Works.
“ We do not love God so much as we are bound
“ to do, &c. &c. We give, forgive, believe,
“ live, and hope *imperfectly*, &c.” Again in the second Part of the Homily on Salvation, our Reformers say, “ So that the true Understanding
“ of this Doctrine, we be justified freely by
“ Faith without Works,---or that we be justi-
“ fied by Faith in Christ only, is not, that this our
“ own Act to believe in Christ, or this our Faith
“ in Christ, which is within us, doth justify us,
“ and DESERVE our Justification unto us, (for that
“ were to count ourselves to be justified by some
“ Act, or Virtue that is within ourselves) but the
“ true Understanding and Meaning thereof is,

“ That

" That altho' we hear God's Word and believe
 " it ; altho' we have Faith, Hope, and Charity,
 " Repentance, Dread, and Fear of God within
 " us, and do never so many Works thereunto ;
 " yet we must renounce the MERIT of all our
 " said Virtues, of Faith, Hope, Charity, and all
 " other Virtues and good Deeds, which we ei-
 " ther *have done*, shall do, or can do, as Things
 " that be far too *weak*, and *insufficient*, and *IM-*
 " *PERFECT*, to DESERVE Remission of our Sins,
 " and Justification : And therefore we must trust
 " only in God's Mercy, and that Sacrifice which
 " our High Priest and Saviour, Christ Jesus,
 " the Son of God, once offered for us upon the
 " Cross, to obtain thereby God's *Grace*, and Re-
 " mission, as well of our original Sin in Baptism,
 " as of all actual Sin committed by us after our
 " Baptism, if WE TRULY REPENT, AND UN-
 " FEIGNEDLY TURN TO HIM AGAIN.--So that
 " as great and godly a Virtue as the lively Faith
 " is, yet it putteth us from itself, and remitteth
 " or appointeth us unto Christ, for to have only
 " by him Remission of our Sins or Justification.
 " So that our Faith in Christ saith unto us thus,
 " It is not I that taketh away your Sins, but it
 " is Christ only, and to him only I send you for
 " that Purpose, forsaking therein all your good
 " Virtues, Words, Thoughts, and Works, and
 " only putting your Trust in Christ."

AND

AND, now, Sir, having proceeded thus far in our Inquiries about this important Subject of Justification, let us here make a Pause, in order to collect what has been said, into one Point of View.

I. THEREFORE it appears, that our *English* Reformers considered the Homily on Salvation, from whence I have made my last Extract, as explanatory of their whole Meaning on this Subject. For they not only express themselves to this Purpose, as you have seen above, but they even refer to this Homily in their 11th Article, of the Salvation of Man. Wherefore that we "are "justified by *Faith only*, is a most wholesome Doctrine, and very full of Comfort, as more largely is expressed in the Homily on Justification." I will therefore take for granted, that if I can trace the Meaning of this Homily, I shall be at no Loss in comprehending their Doctrine of Justification.

WHEREFORE 2dly, I observe, that our first Reformers must have understood the Terms Justification and Salvation as equivalent Terms in this Controversy. For whereas they refer to the Homily on Justification in their 11th Article, there is in Fact no such Homily precisely with that Title. The Homily they meant, is that on Salvation; and therefore it is obvious to the meanest Capacity, that they made no such idle Distinctions between the Conditions

of Justification, and those of Salvation, as a Calvinist must necessarily make. They thought, that *that* which justified, did also save, and that *that* which saved, did also justify.

3dly. THEY supposed, not only the Possibility of the Existence of Good Works prior to our Justification (which a Calvinist can never do, consistently with his genuine Principles) but also they required the *actual Pre-existence* of them, as necessary Conditions, tho' they excluded them as *meritorious Causes*: [See the Quotation; and I beg it may be read with Attention.]

4thly. WHEN they come to make a Renunciation of Merit, they equally renounce the supposed Merit of pre-existent Faith, with that of pre-existent Works. Nay they call Faith itself a Virtue, and a good Work; both which it certainly is; and the Opposition which they intended was not between Faith and Works (which is the Calvinistical System) but between Christ and Works; that is they asserted, that there was no human Merit of any Kind, either of Congruity, or Condignity, to obtain Justification from the Hands of God; but that Christ alone was the meritorious Cause.

WHEREFORE 5thly. When they admit Faith again, as the Instrument of Justification (after having excluded it before under the Notion of a

meri-

meritorious Cause) they admit it as a Kind of Protest against Merit.—“ So that our Faith in “ Christ faith unto us thus, It is not I that taketh “ away your Sins, but it is Christ only, and to “ him only I send you for that Purpose; for “ faking therein (that is, renouncing the pre- “ tended Merit of) all your good Virtues, “ Words, Thoughts, and Works, and putting “ only your Trust in Christ.”

HERE, Sir, you now see their whole Meaning at one View. They plainly meant to say (tho' they expressed themselves very incautiously, and very confusedly) that WE ARE JUSTIFIED BY CHRIST ONLY; and that Repentance towards God, and Faith towards our Lord Jefus Christ, are the necessary Conditions of our Acceptance, but not the meritorious Causes of our Salvation. Whosoever therefore, whether Churchman or Dissenter, Clergyman or Layman, holds this Doctrine, maintains the genuine Doctrine of the Church of *England*: Genuine, I say, as to her real Meaning, and proper Intention. For in regard to the mere Expressions and Phrases of our first Reformers, I do not defend them. They are certainly inaccurate, and ought to be amended. They are not so well guarded against Perversion and Abuse, as every true Friend to our Church-Establishment would wish they were: In short our Reformers used the Phrase, *Justifica-*
tion

tion by Faith only, in a Sense somewhat different from that of St. Paul, from whom they borrowed it, tho' they imagined, that they had used it exactly in the same Sense: And therefore for these Reasons, but not in order to make any real Alteration in the Doctrine itself, I will readily allow that the Phrases and Modes of Expression ought to undergo a Revival and Correction.

AND now, Sir, what can you say to these Things? Is it still your Opinion, that I am the same *infatuated Person*, for subscribing the Articles and Homilies in an Arminian Sense, you had before pronounced me to be? Or do you at last begin to think, that your Censure was rather harsh and unmerited?---I cannot, I dare not believe, but that you have greatly changed your Sentiments in these Respects. I cannot suppose, but that you are willing to acknowledge, I have taken that very Method for investigating the Truth, which the Author of the Confessional ought to have taken, had he the same good End in View; *viz.* by tracing the Argument downwards from the Fountain Head, and by placing the Reader in the very Times, Circumstances, and Situation of the Reformers themselves, when they erected the Establishment of the national Church. Moreover I think and hope, you will do me the further Justice to acknowledge, that I have shunned no Difficulties, nor glossed over any

real Objections ; but that throughout the Course of this Debate, I have acted with an Uprightness and Impartiality, and with a Candour, Moderation and Sincerity, which the warmest Friends and the greatest Admirers of that Gentleman, cannot discover in his Writings. If after this you give him the Preference for the Brilliancy of his Wit, and the Elegance of his Stile, for his keen Satire and pungent Inve^tatives, you have my free and full Consent for so doing. Indeed I do not pretend to be his Rival in these Qualifications, nor can I apprehend, that the Gospel of Christ particularly requires that such Weapons, as he hath made use of, be employed in its Defence. He hath, it is true, professedly set himself up as the Champion of the Cause of genuine and unadulterated Christianity. And it seems, you have been pleased to consider him in the same honourable Point of View ; yet I do not recollect (and if I am wrong, you will set me right ;---I say, I do not recollect) that St. Paul ever recommended to *Timothy* and *Titus*, whom he appointed to be the Defender of the Faith both against Jewish and Gentile Adversaries, to treat their Opponents in the same overbearing, insulting, and supercilious Manner in which this Author hath never failed to treat all those who have dared to differ from his Opinion : And therefore if this be the Specimen which is to be given us of the new and glorious

Light

Light of Gospel Reformation, when freed from Human Impositions, I cannot but declare, that I greatly prefer the old one, with all its Dimness, and all its Imperfections.

HOWEVER, there is one Objection more, which is really and truly of great Importance (though neither you nor he ever made it) and which therefore deserves to be solidly answered, and effectually cleared up.

THE Objection is this: If the literal, exact and precise Meaning of certain Phrases in the Homilies and Articles of the Church of *England*, is only to be learnt by having Recourse to those Scholastic Notions, and antiquated Disputes at and preceding the Reformation, which gave Rise to these Phrases;---what is a common Congregation, what is the Laity in general, or indeed what is the far greater Part of the Clergy themselves to do in such a Case? Are they to be sent to study *Peter Lombard*, or *Thomas Aquinas*, and all the old musty Authors of that Class?---Or even are they to pore over the voluminous Works of *Erasmus* and *Melanthon*, in order to know the Doctrines of their own Church, with Accuracy and Precision? And have you no better, no shorter, nor safer Method than this to recommend for general Practice, and constant Use? Yes, Sir, we have; a Method, which will

will answer every good Purpose that can be desired; and, 'till a Revival and Correction of the Articles and Homilies can be made, a Method, which might serve as an excellent Succedaneum, to supply their Places.

SUPPOSE therefore, that both Homilies and Articles were quite removed;---removed, I mean, 'till they had undergone an exact and critical Correction: And that no other Test or Subscription were required in the mean Time, than the usual
 * Assent and Consent to the Liturgy of the Church

* Or rather, as many Persons object to the present Form of Assent and Consent, &c. suppose another Form of Subscription were proposed, somewhat to the following Effect.

" I A. B. now to be ordained [Priest or Deacon] or, now
 " to be instituted [installed, &c.] or, now to be licensed a
 " Curate [or Lecturer] do solemnly and sincerely declare it
 " to be my firm Belief, that the Liturgy of the Church of
 " England, as set forth in a Book, entituled The Book of
 " Common Prayer, [together with, here mention the Par-
 " culars] is a rational, devout, and edifying Service, con-
 " taining the Fundamentals of Christian Salvation and a-
 " greeable to the Word of God: Which Service I there-
 " fore bind myself to use in all my public Ministrations, ac-
 " cording to the Rubrics, Calendars, Rules and Orders set
 " forth in the said Book. And I do further declare, that I
 " will never teach or preach any Doctrine contrary thereto
 " while I shall act as a Pastor, or profess myself a Member
 " of the said Church." This Form, or something to the
 like Effect, it is humbly apprehended, would be a good
 Succedaneum to the present Articles and Homilies, 'till they
 are properly amended, agreeably to the genuine Sense, Mean-
 ing, and Intention of the original Compilers. In the mean
 Time, it is presumed, that such a Subscription is not incap-
 pable of answering all the necessary Purposes of *Unity of Doc-*
trine and Uniformity of Worship in a national established
 Church.

of *England*. The Liturgy was compiled without paying improper Regards to the Subtleties of the Schoolmen : The Liturgy doth not enter into the Labyrinths of Theological Controversies ; and yet the Liturgy must be allowed to be the Church of *England* Man's principal Standard of Orthodoxy next to his Bible ; and to be his sole human Guide in his public Devotions.

THIS being the Case, I propose to draw up the quinquarticular Controversy in opposite Columns, the one Side to represent Calvinism, and the other Arminianism ; and then shall add such Extracts from the several Offices of our Common Prayer as are relative to each Head, without intermixing any Reflections of my own, in order that you and every intelligent Reader may judge for yourselves, in regard to the real Merits of the present Dispute. And in doing this, as I have ever made it my Rule to prefer *Things to Words, Ideas to Sounds, and Sense to Language*, I will not enter into the Minutiæ of the Differences, or into the Distinctions between the Supra-lapsarian, or Sub-lapsarian System ; between Jansenism and Calvinism, nor yet between those of Arminianism and Molinism ; nor shall I consider the Inconsistencies and Contradictions, which may be found in the Writings of *St. Augustin* and others on these Heads :---But taking for granted, that they all reasoned consistently
and

and argued fairly, and that they were willing to stand by the Consequences of their own Opinions, I humbly apprehend, that their respective Notions might be represented after the following Manner, with sufficient Justice and Exactness.

I. P R E D E S T I N A T I O N .

Calvinism, alias the Tenets of St. Augustin, and of the Schoolmen, alias Jansenism.

God hath from all Eternity predestinated a certain Number of Men out of the fallen Mass as Monuments of his free and undeserved Mercy; and hath displayed his Glory and deserved Justice by reprobating or rejecting the rest, whereby they irretrievably fall into eternal Damnation; and this Decree of God is *absolute, i. e.* not made in Consequence of the foreseen Obedience of the Elect, or Disobedience of the Reprobate, but is merely the Result of his sovereign Will and Pleasure.

Arminianism, alias the Tenets of the Greek Fathers, alias Semi-pelagianism, alias Molinism.

God hath from all Eternity decreed to display both the Glory of his unmerited Mercy, and his exact and irreprehensible Justice to fallen Man thro' the Terms of the Gospel, by making a Tender of Pardon and Salvation unto ALL; and by calling and electing some particular Nations preferably to others, to the Means of knowing his Will; which Preference to the Means of Salvation is the sole Meaning of the Term Predestination, when used in Scripture.

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*Calvinism, &c.**Arminianism, &c.*

As to the Case of Individuals, living within those Districts which are enlightened by the Gospel, God having foreseen from all Eternity, *who* those Persons would be, who should conform to his Offer of Grace and Pardon, hath predestinated them to final Salvation ; but such as he foresaw would remain incorrigible and disobedient, he reprobated, or rejected.

Liturgy of the Church of England.

Response after the Creed.---And make thy chosen [thine elected] People joyful.

Baptism of Adults.---Grant that the Persons now to be baptized, may receive the Fulness of thy Grace, and ever remain in the Number of thy faithful and *elect* Children.

Catechism.---In my Baptism I was made a Member of Christ, the Child of God, and an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven [*i. e.* I was elected to a State of Salvation.]

Catechism again.---I thank my heavenly Father that he hath called [elected] me to *this State of Salvation.*

Catechism

Catechism again.---I believe in God the Holy Ghost, who hath sanctified me, and all the elect People of God.

Burial Service.---Befeeching thee, that it may please thee of thy gracious Goodnes shortly to accomplish the Number of thine Elect.

II. R E D E M P T I O N.

Calvinism, &c.

GOD sent his Son to purchase and redeem those *only*, whom he had absolutely decreed to *save* out of the *corrupted Mass*; but as to such others, whom he had before determined to omit, or pass by, and consequently to *damn*, Christ did not actually and intentionally redeem them; nor was he sent into the World for that Purpose: So that properly and literally speaking, they have *no Saviour, or Redeemer.*

Arminianism, &c.

CHRIST died as well for *those*, whom God had reprobated to Damnation, having foreseen their Disobedience, as those whom he elected to Life in Consequence of the Fore-knowledge of their *saving Faith*. For the Merit of the Redemption was *designed* to be an *universal Restorative* to all Mankind, and is as efficacious in itself to the Salvation of the Reprobate, as of the Elect: Christ on his Part having shed as much Blood to save *Judas*, as to redeem *Peter*.

Liturgy

Liturgy of the Church of England.

Te Deum.--We therefore pray thee help thy Servants, whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious Blood.

Litany.--O God the Son Redeemer of the World.

Item.--Spare us, good Lord, spare thy People, whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious Blood.

General Thanksgiving.--We bless thee,--for thine inestimable Love in the *Redemption of the World* by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Collect for Good Friday.--We beseech thee graciously to behold this thy Family, for which our Lord Jesus Christ was contented to suffer Death upon the Cross.

Collect for the second Sunday after Easter.--Almighty God, who hast given thine only Son to be unto us,--a Sacrifice for Sin.

Exhortation before the Communion.--Above all Things we must give most humble and hearty Thanks to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost for the *Redemption of the World*.

Preface to the Communion on Easter-Day.--He [Christ] is the very Paschal Lamb, which was offered for us, and hath taken away the Sin of the World.

Prayer of Consecration.--Almighty God,--who of thy tender Mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer Death upon the Cross for our Redemption, who made there,--

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a full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice for the Sins of the WHOLE WORLD.

At the Delivery of the Bread and Wine to each Communicant.--The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for THEE: The Blood which was shed for THEE.

Thanksgiving after receiving.--We most heartily thank thee, that thou dost ASSURE US,--that we are Heirs thro' Hope of thy everlasting Kingdom by the Merits of the most precious Death and Passion of thy dear Son.

Catechism.--God the Son,--hath redeemed ME, and ALL MANKIND.

III. G R A C E.

Calvinism, &c.

God doth, sooner or later, effectually call by the Influences of his Spirit such as he had absolutely decreed to save, and had sent his Son to purchase and redeem; i. e. he infuses into them such a Portion or Measure of Divine Grace, as he foresees must inevitably operate to that Degree, one Time or other, on their

Arminianism, &c.

As God hath decreed to put all Christians into a probationary and a *salvable* State, and then to leave it to their own Wills, restored to Freedom by Grace, whether they will be actually saved or not; he therefore gives or restores to all Mankind, as soon as they have need of it, such a Sufficiency of preventing [prevenient or

Calvinism, &c.

their Understandings, Wills, and Affections, that there is *not a Possibility* left in them finally to withstand their Conversion from Sin to Holiness, or to frustrate the Decree of Election.

BUT as to those, whom God did not decree to *save*, and Christ did *not redeem*, they are excluded from having such a *Sufficiency of Grace*, as is *able* to save them, and they must therefore unavoidably perish for ever.

Arminianism, &c.

or antecedent] Grace, as amounts to a moral Power, Faculty, or Capacity of *beginning* the Christian Life ; and then he *increases* or *diminishes* the internal Operations of the Holy Spirit, according as they improve or abuse his former Favours.

Liturgy of the Church of England.

Absolution.---Wherefore let us beseech him to grant us true Repentance, and his *Holy Spirit*.

Prayer for the Clergy, &c.---Send down upon our Bishops and Curates, and ALL Congregations committed to their Charge, the healthful Spirit of thy Grace.

Litany.---That it may please thee to give to all thy People *Increase of Grace*.

Litany

Litany again.---To have Mercy upon [to give Grace unto] all Men.

Litany again.---To endue us with the Grace of thy holy Spirit.

Collect for the first Sunday in Advent.---Almighty God give us Grace, that we may cast away the Works of Darknes.

Collect for the fourth Sunday in Advent.---That thy bountiful Grace and Mercy may speedily help and deliver us.

Collect for Christmas Day.---Grant that we thy Children by Adoption and Grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit.

Collect for the second Sunday in Lent.---Keep us, inwardly in our Souls, that we may be defended from all evil Thoughts.

Fifth Sunday after Easter.---Grant unto us, that by thy Holy Inspiration, we may think those Things that be good.

Sunday after Ascension.---Send thy Holy Spirit to comfort us.

Whitsunday.---Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right Judgment in all Things.

Eleventh Sunday after Trinity.---Grant unto us such a Measure of thy Grace.

Prayer after receiving the Sacrament.---Humbly beseeching thee, that all we, who are Partakers of this Holy Communion, may be fulfilled with thy Grace.

Baptism

Baptism of Adults.---Grant that the Persons now to be baptized may receive the Fulness of thy Grace.

Catechism.---I pray unto God to give *me* his Grace, that I may continue in the same [in this State of Salvation] unto my Life's End.

Catechism again.---God the Holy Ghost sanctifieth *me* [giveth Grace to me] and all the elect People of God [to all Christian People.]

Catechism again.---I desire my Lord God,--- to send his Grace to *me*, and to *all People*.

Confirmation Service.----Strengthen them [the Persons to be confirmed] we beseech thee, O Lord, with the *Holy Ghost*.

Act of Confirmation.---Defend, O Lord, *this* thy Servant with thy Heavenly Grace, that he may---daily increase in thy Holy Spirit.

Commination Office.---If we will submit ourselves unto him,---and *be ordered by* the Governance of his Holy Spirit.

VI. JUSTIFICATION.

Calvinism, &c.

God doth freely justify those who enjoy the Benefit of absolute Election, Redemption, and the effectual calling of saving Grace; that is,

Arminianism, &c.

THOSE who use well the Grace that is given them, and *conform* to the *Terms* of the Gospel, are admitted to Pardon and Justification; that is,

Litany again.---To have Mercy upon [to give Grace unto] all Men.

Litany again.---To endue us with the Grace of thy holy Spirit.

Collect for the first Sunday in Advent.---Almighty God give us Grace, that we may cast away the Works of Darknes.

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Catechism.---I pray unto God to give *me* his Grace, that I may continue in the same [in this State of Salvation] unto my Life's End.

Catechism again.---God the Holy Ghost sanctifieth *me* [giveth Grace to *me*] and all the elect People of God [to all Christian People.]

Catechism again.---I desire my Lord God,---to send his Grace to *me*, and to *all People*.

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VI. JUSTIFICATION.

Calvinism, &c.

God doth freely justify those who enjoy the Benefit of absolute Election, Redemption, and the effectual calling of saving Grace; that is,

Arminianism, &c.

THOSE who use well the Grace that is given them, and conform to the Terms of the Gospel, are admitted to Pardon and Justification; that is,

Calvinism, &c.

is, he *imputes* to Christ all their *Sins*, and *imputes* to them his Righteousness and *Perfection*: And this Intent of God to justify them, or this *effectual Calling*, is at some certain Juncture, Day, or Hour, *notified* to them by the *Infusion* of the Gift and Habit of Faith; whereby they lay hold, as with an Instrument, on the Merits of Christ, *transferring* their Sins to Christ, and receiving his Righteousness in Return: For the Sake of which Righteousness they are finally treated by God, as if they had been perfectly righteous in themselves, or had in their own Persons completely fulfilled the Divine Law.

Arminianism, &c.

is, were God to call them to the Bar of Judgment, and to try them, he would pronounce them *not guilty*: Because Christ having purchased for them the Law of Faith and Repentance, as the Law or Terms by which they are to be judged and tried; and they having through the Power of Divine Grace (first *enabling* them to work, and then *co-operating* with their own endeavours) fulfilled this Law; that is, become *true* and *Christian Penitents*; God therefore, for the Sake of the alone Merits of Jesus Christ, admits of this Qualification, remits the Punishment due to their Sins, and superadds the Rewards of eternal Glory.

Liturgy of the Church of England.

Exhortation.---The Scripture moveth us---to acknowledge and confess our manifold Sins;---

with

with an humble, penitent, and obedient Heart,---
to the End that we may obtain Forgiveness [Justification] of the same.

Confession.---Spare [forgive] thou them, O God, which confess their Faults: Restore [re-justify] thou them that are penitent.

Absolution.---He pardoneth and absolveth [justifieth] all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel.

Collect for Ash-Wednesday.---Almighty God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, and doest forgive the Sins of [justify] them that are penitent.

Exhortation before the Sacrament.---The Benefit [of receiving] is great, if with a true penitent Heart and lively Faith we receive that Holy Sacrament; for then we spiritually eat the Flesh of Christ, and drink his Blood, then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us, we are one with Christ, and Christ with us [that is, then we are justified.]—Judge therefore yourselves, Brethren, repent you truly of your former Sins, have a lively and steadfast Faith in Christ our Saviour, amend your Lives, and be in perfect Charity with all Men;---so shall ye be meet Partakers of these Holy Mysteries [so shall ye be justified.]

Absolution in the Sacrament.---Almighty God hath promised Forgiveness of Sins [Justification] to all them that with hearty Repentance and true Faith turn unto him.

Visitation

Visitation of the Sick.—Give him unfeigned Repentance for all the Errors of his Life past, and steadfast Faith in thy Son Jesus, that his Sins may be done away, and his Pardon sealed in Heaven, [i. e. that he may be justified] before he go hence.

V. PERSEVERANCE.

Calvinism, &c.

THE *Elected, Redeemed, and Called*, by effectual Grace, and *Justified*, cannot possibly in the Nature of Things finally fall away. For though perhaps they should chance to be overtaken in a Fault for a Time; nay, tho' they should be guilty of the most horrid and shocking Crimes, and Blasphemies, such as premeditated Murder and Adultery, and the Denial of that Christ who bought them, yet they not only *may*, but they *must* return again, and become holy *before they die*; because the Decree of Election stands

Arminianism, &c.

SEEING our Salvation is in its own Nature a *contingent Thing*, and dependent, as to the *Event*, on our own Conduct and Behaviour, there cannot be, in ordinary Cases, *any absolute Certainty* thereof: And therefore though a Man may at present have a reasonable well-grounded Assurance, that he is in a *justified State*, there is a *Possibility* of his falling away at last, and of being finally lost; because he has no other Security (in ordinary Cases) that his Justification will continue valid, and remain in Force, than either

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Calvinism, &c.

stands *sure*, and cannot be *cancelled*. Hence, once justified, always justified; once in Grace, always in Grace; once regenerate, always regenerate; that is, always as to the *Habit*, tho' not as to the *Act*.

Arminianism, &c.

by keeping up to the Terms on which it was first granted, which is the best and safest Method; or at least by becoming a true and sincere Penitent afterwards. Consequently as often as a Man is a *deliberate Sinner*, so often is his Justification revoked, and his Name struck out of the Book of Life; and as often as he becomes a true Christian Penitent, so often is his Justification renewed, and his Name inserted again.

Liturgy of the Church of England.

Absolution.---Wherefore let us beseech him to grant us---his holy Spirit, that the *Rest* of our Life *hereafter* may be pure and holy; so that at the *last* we may come to his eternal Joy.

Response.---*Take not thy Holy Spirit from us.*

Litanies.---That it may please thee to *strengthen* such as do *stand*,---to *raise up* them that *fall*, and finally to beat down Satan under our Feet.

Collect for Innocents-Day.---O Almighty God, so *strengthen* us by thy Grace, that by the Con-

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stancy of our Faith, even *unto Death*, we may glorify thy holy Name.

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany.---O Lord we beseech thee, keep thy Church and Household continually in thy true Religion, that they who do lean only upon the Hope of thy heavenly Grace, may *ever more* be defended by thy mighty Power.

Seventh Sunday after Trinity.---Lord of all Power and Might, graft in our Hearts the Love of thy Name, encrease in us true Religion, nourish us with all Goodness, and of thy great Mercy *keep us* in the same.

Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity.---Keep, we beseech, O Lord, thy Church with thy *perpetual* Mercy; and because the Frailty of our Nature without thee cannot but fall, keep us *ever* by thy Help.

Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity.--Lord we pray thee, that thy Grace may always prevent [precede] and follow us, and make us *continually* to be given to all good Works.

Baptism of Adults.---Grant that the Persons now to be baptized [to be justified, see the Context] may receive the Fulness of thy Grace, and ever remain in the Number of thy faithful and elect Children.

Exhortation after Baptism of Adults.---Seeing now, dearly beloved, that these Persons are regenerate, and grafted into the Body of Christ's Church [that is, are justified] let us give Thanks unto Almighty God for these Benefits, and with

one Accord make our Prayers unto him, that they may lead the *Rest* of their Life according to this *Beginning*.

C O N C L U S I O N.

AND thus, Sir, I have gone through every Part of my intended Examination of the publick Offices of the Church of *England*. It belongs not to me to decide with a magisterial Air, how I have succeeded. That Kind of Self-Confidence and proud Boasting seems to be claimed by the Author of the Confessional, and his Associates, as their peculiar Province; and since they are so desirous of engrossing it, may they enjoy it, unenvied, as their exclusive Privilege. One Thing, however, I must be allowed *most solemnly* to affirm, because no other Person, except myself, has any Right to affirm it---That after the most severe and impartial Scrutiny, which I have been able to make, I am fully convinced, in my own Mind, that I subscribe to the *Tenor* of the Homilies, Articles, and Liturgy of the Church of *England* in the *very identical* Sense in which *Cranmer* and *Ridley*, had they been now alive, would have wished that I should have subscribed to them. It is true, I may be mistaken in this Persuasion; for after all the Care and Caution I can use, I do not arrogate to myself absolute

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Infallibility : But there is one Favour, in which I think you may safely indulge me, without hurting the Cause of Truth, or Impartiality. You may safely grant, that, if I am mistaken, few Persons have taken more Pains to be rightly informed, than I have done, or have pursued a better Method, if so good ; and therefore, supposing at the last that I have failed in the Attempt, I am willing to hope, that both in this World, and the next, my Mistakes will be esteemed (I do not say very *meritorious*, as some have done, but) very innocent, and very excusable.

Two Things more I have to add on this Head, and I have done. The first is, That if the Exiles, driven out by the Persecutions of Queen *Mary*, on their Return home from those *Calvinistical* Places *Frankfort* and *Geneva*, chose to understand *Cranmer's* and *Ridley's* Words in a Sense different from what *Cranmer* and *Ridley* ever intended,---that is no Charge against me ; I am not answerable either for their Mistakes, or their Perversions : Nor yet do I think it would tend at all either to the Honour of God, or the Good of Mankind, were I to present the Public with a long List of all those Artifices and Chicaneries, those idle Distinctions and mental Reservations, which the Calvinists in general are forced to use in order to gloss over their Subscriptions to the

original

original Doctrines of our Church. Those who wish to see these Subterfuges, may find enough, even to Satiety, in the Theses of the *British Divines* at the Synod of *Dort*, and in the Writings of *Prynn, Hickman, Yates, Rous, Carleton, Edwards*, and many others. In short, the Case of the present Arminian Clergy respecting their Predecessors the Calvinists in the Reigns of *Elizabeth* and *James I.* is very similar to the Case of all Christians, and more especially of all Protestants respecting those who are called the *Apostolic Fathers*. We acknowledge, that these Fathers were *co-temporary* with some of the Apostles. But nevertheless we are far from esteeming them to be the best Interpreters of the Apostolic Writings; nay more, we think, we can shew, that in their Explanations, or Applications of Texts of Scripture, they were several Times *very much* mistaken. Just so; if any Man shall object to me the Authority of the Lambeth Articles, or of the *British Divines* at the Synod of *Dort*;--my Reply is this, That, according to the best of my Judgment, the Compilers of those Articles, and the *British Divines* at that Assembly either mistook, or perverted the genuine Sense of the Church of *England*:--And moreover I affirm, (and I appeal to their own Writings) that they could not possibly have reconciled their strange Positions with those Extracts which are produced in this very Letter out of the Homilies

and

and Articles,---and especially out of our excellent Liturgy ;---I say, they could not possibly have reconciled their Positions with these Extracts any otherwise than by having recourse to such unnatural forced Distinctions and mental Reservations, as ill became the plain Professors of a plain Gospel to have made Use of.

THE 2d Thing is, that I do not esteem myself obliged to answer all the Objections, which either a Deist, or a Calvinist may think he has a Right to make to the Arminian System as here set forth. A Deist may object to the Arminian Account of the Fall of Man, and the Introduction of Evil into the World ; and a Calvinist may find Fault with the Notion of God's Prescience being reconciliable with Man's free Agency. Now I do not pretend to remove all the Difficulties which may belong to either of these Hypotheses ; and I profess myself to be of the Number of those who are content to embrace that System which appears to have the *fewest* and the *smallest* Difficulties attending it (and therefore is the *best* upon the whole) notwithstanding it may contain many Things, which my poor imperfect Judgment cannot comprehend, much less explain. In short, my grand Point in this Epistle was to defend the Clerical Subscription on the Arminian Plan, and *that only* : And if I have done this to the Satisfaction of the Candid and Impartial,

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I have obtained my Ends in writing, and shall not think my Time and Labour to have been ill bestowed. I have the Honour to be, Reverend Sir, with true Esteem,

Your affectionate Brother,

And most obedient humble Servant,

Glocester, Dec. 18,
1772.

JOSIAH TUCKER.

F I N I S.



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